



®

SPAWN®

image

18
FEB

DIGITAL
EDITION



ON THE STREET THEY CALL HIM DIPPER.

NO.

THIS
AIN'T
RIGHT.

HE WASN'T
ALWAYS DIPPER;
HE USED TO BE
SOMEONE ELSE.

MARTY.
THAT
WAS IT.
MARTY
SLADEK.

PRIVATE MARTY SLADEK.
KHE SANH. '69.

'YOU GOTTA
WATCH OUT FOR
YOUR BUDDIES.'
THAT WAS THE
RULE IN 'NAM.

ONLY
ONE
TIME, HE
DIDN'T...

HE STILL DREAMS ABOUT
IT-- THE HOT WIND LIKE
A PUNCH IN THE GUT AND
THE FLYING CHUNKS OF
WET MEAT THAT USED TO
BE MEN.

HE'D FELT THAT
SAME DEVIL'S WIND
AGAIN WHEN THE
SHINING GUY TOOK
OUT THE SPAWN,
JUST MOMENTS AGO.

WHAT'S A GUY TO DO?

WHAT'S A GUY TO DO
WHEN HE'S SEEN HIS
BEST BUDDIES TURNED
INTO EXHIBITS FROM A
MUSEUM OF HORRORS?

THEY ROTATED MARTY
BACK TO THE WORLD
BUT IT DIDN'T MAKE
SENSE ANYMORE. HE
JUST KEPT DRINKING
AND DRINKING UNTIL
HE FORGOT WHY HE
EVER STARTED.

BUT NOW IT'S
HAPPENING
AGAIN.

THE SPAWN GUY
TURNED UP OUT
OF NOWHERE WITH
SOME SUPER-CRAZY
ON HIS TAIL. HE
WAS BEATEN,
WIPED-OUT, AND
NOBODY SEEMED
ABLE TO DO ANY-
THING TO HELP.

'YOU GOTTA WATCH
OUT FOR YOUR
BUDDIES.' THAT
WAS THE RULE.

IT AIN'T
RIGHT WE SHOULD
JUST STAND
HERE.

IT JUST
AIN'T
RIGHT.

BUT THAT
WAS A LONG
TIME AGO.

AND THIS
IS NOW.

SEE,
HELLSPAWN?

IT'S
EASY
TO
DIE.





I
PROMISE
TO MAKE IT
HURT.



WHAM



YOU
GOTTA
WATCH OUT
FOR YOUR
BUDDIES.

WHO...?

FILTH!

I'LL BURN
YOUR *EYES*
OUT! I'LL--

I DON'T
THINK SO,
PAL.

THIS IS
OUR TURF AND
WE STICK
TOGETHER.

YOU GOT
A BEEF WITH
THE SPAWN
YOU GOT A
BEEF WITH *ALL*
OF US.



YOU
DON'T KNOW
WHAT YOU'RE
FACING...

I'LL TEAR
YOU ALL
APART...

THAT'S
ENOUGH,
BUD.

THESE
PEOPLE ARE
UNDER **MY**
PROTECTION.



GOT
THAT?

KROON

SHRAAAAK!

MY COSTUME HOWLS
AS HE TAGS ME WITH
ANOTHER BLAST.

GOT TO
MOVE
IN FAST.



I'M STILL WEAK.



I CAN'T AFFORD TO LET HIM GAIN THE ADVANTAGE AGAIN.

YOU THINK YOU CAN HURT ME-- HEAVEN'S SOLDIER?



I'LL SHOW YOU PAIN.

THIS IS WHAT I FEEL.

NNNGH





WELCOME
TO THE
REAL WORLD,
BASTARD!

HAVE
A NICE
DAY.

TSCHH!





I THINK
I GOT
HIM.

I *HIT* HIM.
SCARED THE
CRAP OUTTA
ME BUT I
HIT HIM.

YOU
GOTTA
WATCH OUT
FOR YOUR
BUDDIES,
RIGHT?



SURE,
DIPPER.

DID I
DO THE
RIGHT
THING?

YOU
DID THE
RIGHT THING,
BUDDY.



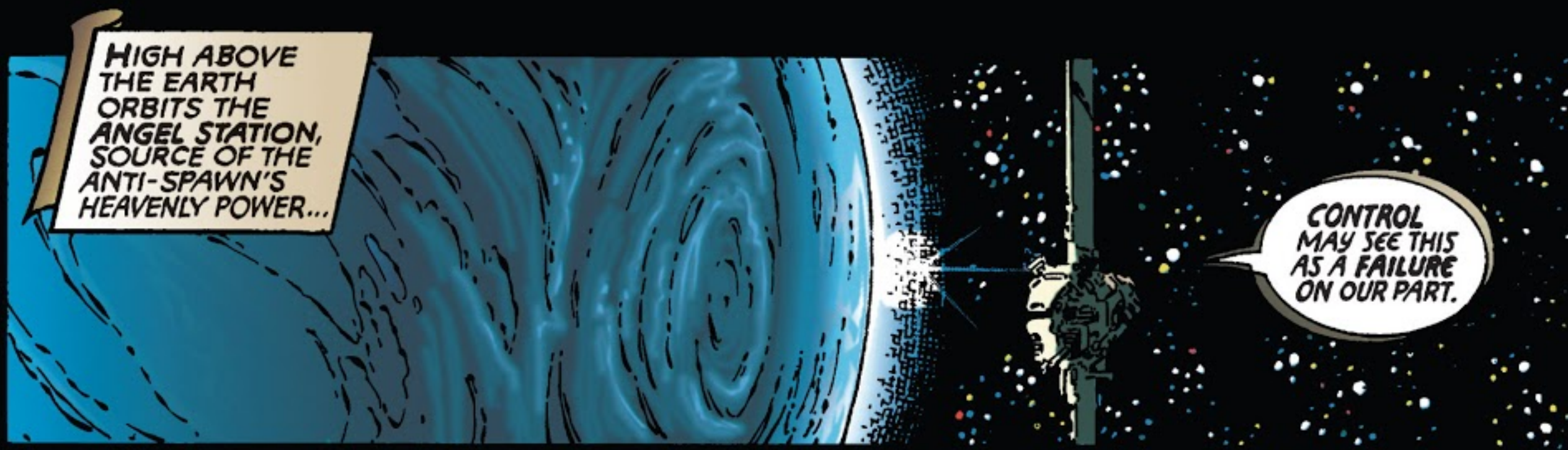
JEEZ!
WHAT'S
HE DOIN'
NOW?



DISAPPEARED.
LOOK AT THAT.

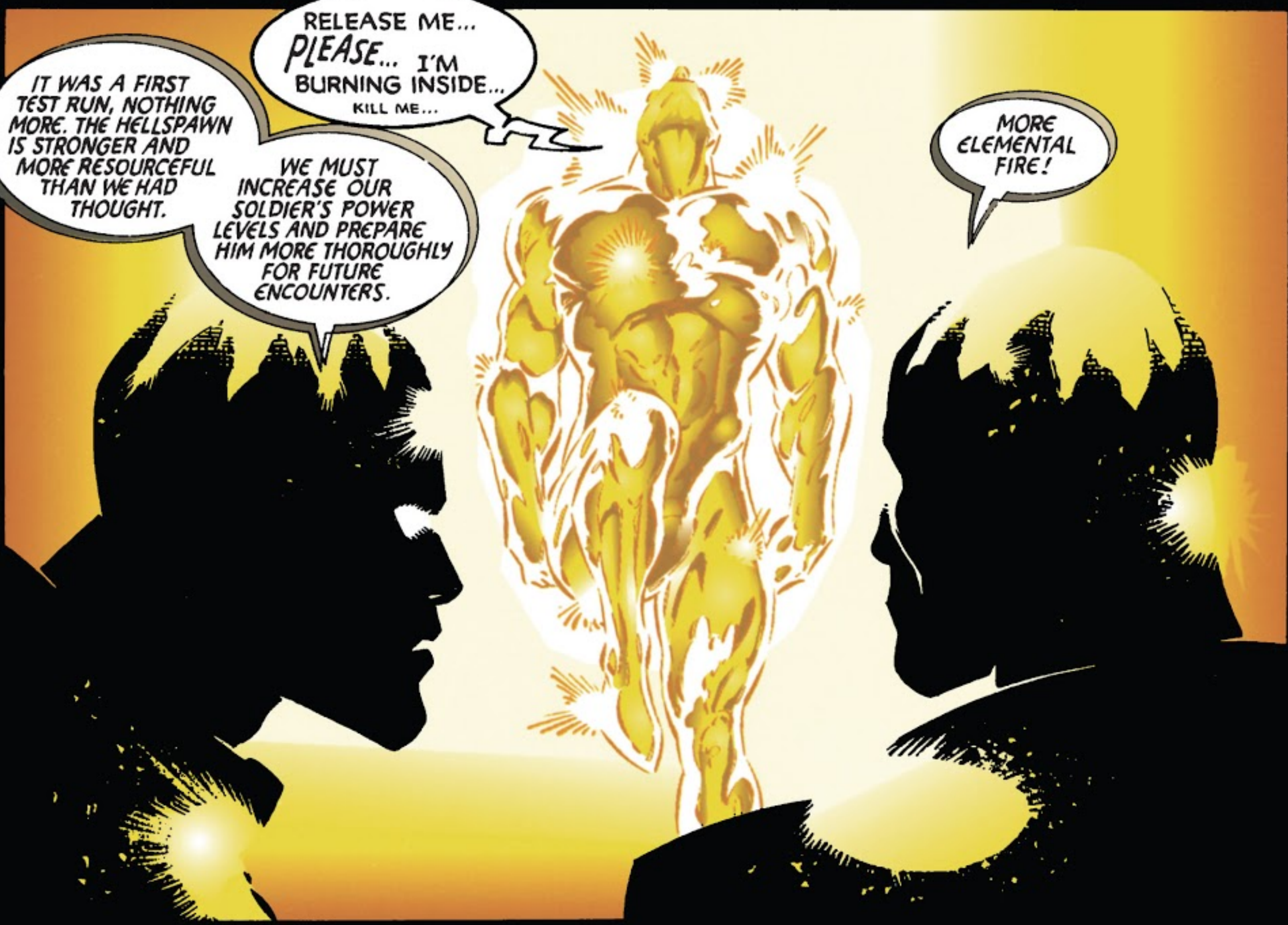
WELL,
I'LL BE
DAMNED.

I
WOULDN'T
RECOMMEND
IT.



HIGH ABOVE
THE EARTH
ORBITS THE
ANGEL STATION,
SOURCE OF THE
ANTI- SPAWN'S
HEAVENLY POWER...

CONTROL
MAY SEE THIS
AS A FAILURE
ON OUR PART.



IT WAS A FIRST
TEST RUN, NOTHING
MORE. THE HELLSPAWN
IS STRONGER AND
MORE RESOURCEFUL
THAN WE HAD
THOUGHT.

RELEASE ME...
PLEASE... I'M
BURNING INSIDE...
KILL ME...

WE MUST
INCREASE OUR
SOLDIER'S POWER
LEVELS AND PREPARE
HIM MORE THOROUGHLY
FOR FUTURE
ENCOUNTERS.

MORE
ELEMENTAL
FIRE!



NO MORE!
PLEASE!

NOOOOOO



I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE HELL THAT WAS ALL ABOUT BUT I HOPE IT'S OVER...

WELL, I HEARD YOU COULD BE PRETTY DUMB BUT GIMME A BREAK! OVER?

YOU THINK HEAVEN GOES TO ALL THE TROUBLE OF EMPOWERING AN ANTI-SPAWN JUST TO HAVE IT BEATEN IN ONE LITTLE SCUFFLE?



AN ANTI-SPAWN?

LOOK, WHO ARE YOU? DIDN'T I SEE YOU EARLIER?

SURE DID. YOU EVEN SAVED MY LIFE, ALTHOUGH, TO TELL THE TRUTH, IT DIDN'T NEED SAVING.

WE'VE BEEN WATCHING YOU, SIMMONS. I BELIEVE YOU MET ONE OF US BEFORE, A MAN NAMED CAGLIOSTRO.*

*SEE ISSUE #9 -- Tom



YOU SEE, HEAVEN AND HELL AIN'T THE ONLY PLAYERS IN THIS GAME.

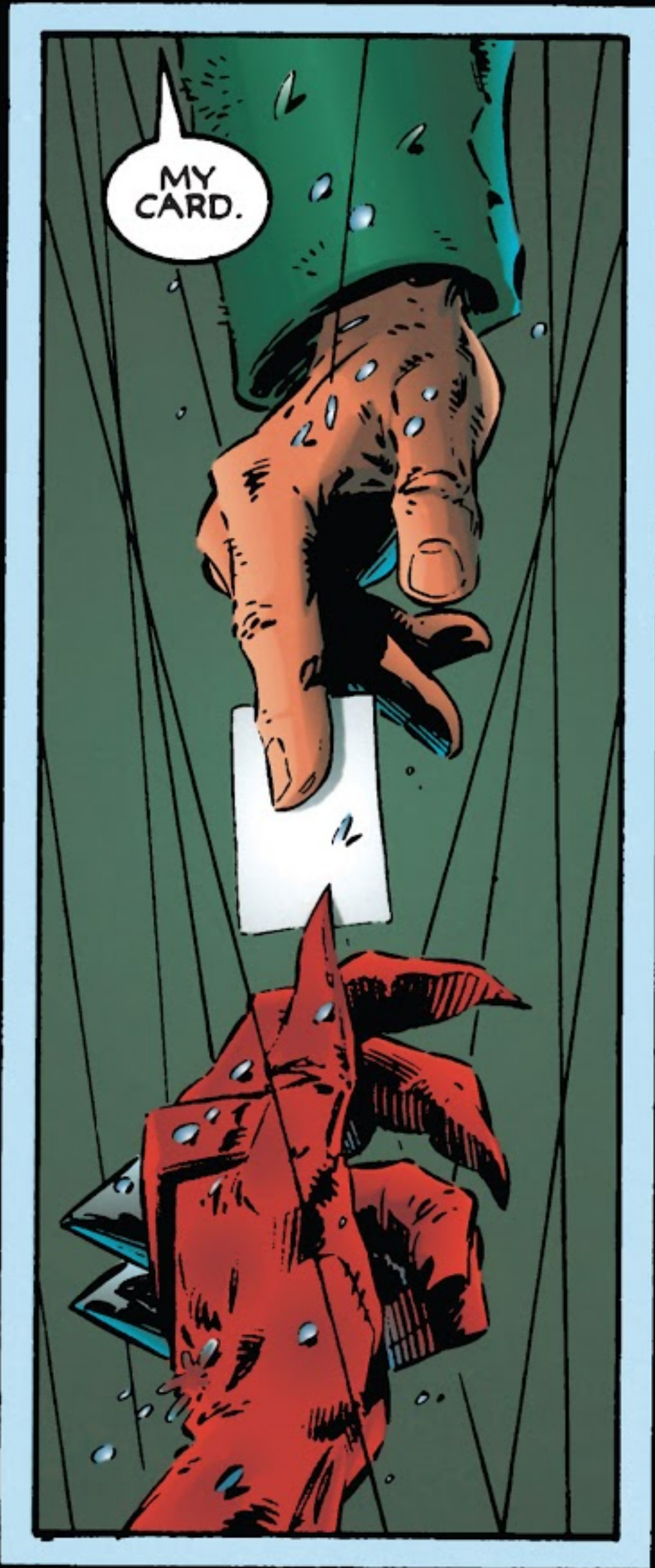
THERE ARE OTHER POWERS AND AGENCIES, OWING ALLEGIANCE TO NEITHER SIDE, AND THERE ARE METHODS WHEREBY YOU CAN UNDO THE BARGAIN YOU MADE AND RETAIN YOUR POWERS.



BELIEVE ME, YOU CAN BEAT THE DEVIL.

WHO ARE YOU?

WHAT ARE YOU TELLING ME?



MY CARD.



BUT... BUT IT'S BLANK.

ONLY FOR NOW.



WHEN THE TIME COMES, WE'LL BE IN TOUCH.

MORE QUESTIONS.

FOR ANOTHER DAY.



RIGHT NOW, THERE'S SOMETHING I STILL HAVE TO DO.

HERE IN THE NEVADA DESERT, THERE'S A DOORWAY TO HELL. IT LOOKS LIKE A TOWN BUT IT'S MADE OUT OF SOMETHING CALLED PSYCHOPASM-- A SUBSTANCE WHICH CHANGES SHAPE IN RESPONSE TO THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS.

THEY TOOK MY MEMORIES AND USED THEM TO GIVE FORM TO THIS TERRIBLE PLACE.

THEY TOOK EVERYTHING I WAS AND PERVERTED IT.

NOW I'M TAKIN' IT BACK.





ONLY WAY
I KNOW
HOW.

**YOU
THERE!**



STOP
RIGHT
THERE!

TURN AROUND!
SHOW YOURSELF,
GODDAMNIT!



OH
GOD.

WHO
ARE
YOU?...

WELL, WELL.
YOU WON'T REMEM-
BER ME BUT I
REMEMBER YOU,
MAJOR VALE. YOU AND
JASON WYNN WERE
CUT FROM THE
SAME CLOTH, WEREN'T
YOU?

REMEMBER ECUADOR? SIX
GOOD MEN DIED, A WHOLE
VILLAGE OF INNOCENT PEOPLE
WAS WIPED OUT AND YOU AND
JASON COVERED THE
WHOLE THING UP.

HOW DO YOU
KNOW ABOUT THAT?
THAT WAS A COVERT
OPERATION. WHO
THE HELL ARE
YOU, MISTER?

ANSWER
ME!
THAT'S AN
ORDER!



MAYBE I
GOT SICK OF
TAKING ORDERS
FROM PEOPLE
LIKE YOU,
VALE.

NOW
I'M GIVING
YOU AN
ORDER.



I WISH I
COULD SAY
IT MAKES
ME FEEL
BETTER.

TIME TO
FINISH
THE JOB.

I WATCH IT ALL
COME DOWN. I
WATCH IT ALL BURN;
THE HOUSE I GREW
UP IN, THE BAR I
DRANK IN, THE PARK
AND THE SCHOOL AND
UNCLE MARTIN'S STORE.

MY LIFE
GOES UP
IN FLAMES.



EVERYTHING
THAT WAS
HUMAN IS
GONE.

EXCEPT
FOR ONE
THING.



ONE MEMORY OF A PERFECT
DAY REMAINS AS I STAND
IN THE BLAZING RUINS.

THE MEMORY OF A
SUNLIT SPRING DAY ON
THE LAKE. THE DAY I
ASKED WANDA TO
MARRY ME.

BEST DAY
OF MY LIFE.



I USE MY MIND TO
COLLAPSE THE ENTIRE
SCENE, SHAPING THE
PSYCHOPLASM INTO A
MORE MANAGEABLE
FORM.



I TAKE THAT LAST MEMORY
AND REDUCE IT DOWN TO A
SINGLE SPARK.

THAT WAS THE
BEST DAY, BEST
THING I EVER
DID. IT'S WORTH
KEEPING BUT I'D
ONLY BREAK IT
OR LOSE IT.



GUESS I SHOULD
PUT IT SOMEWHERE
SAFE.



QUEENS,
NEW YORK.

LOOK
AT THAT
RAIN!



YEAH,
IT'S A
HELL OF A
NIGHT,
WANDA.

ARE YOU
OKAY? YOU
SEEM KIND OF
RESTLESS
OR SOME-
THING.



I DON'T
KNOW. JUST
THINKING...

WE'RE
SO LUCKY,
AREN'T WE,
TERRY? WE'VE
GOT EVERYTHING
WE EVER
WANTED.

I JUST
FEEL SORRY
FOR ANY
POOR THING
THAT HAS TO
BE OUT
THERE.



WANDA.

I SAVED
IT FOR
YOU.



...IT JUST SEEMS...

OH.

WANDA?

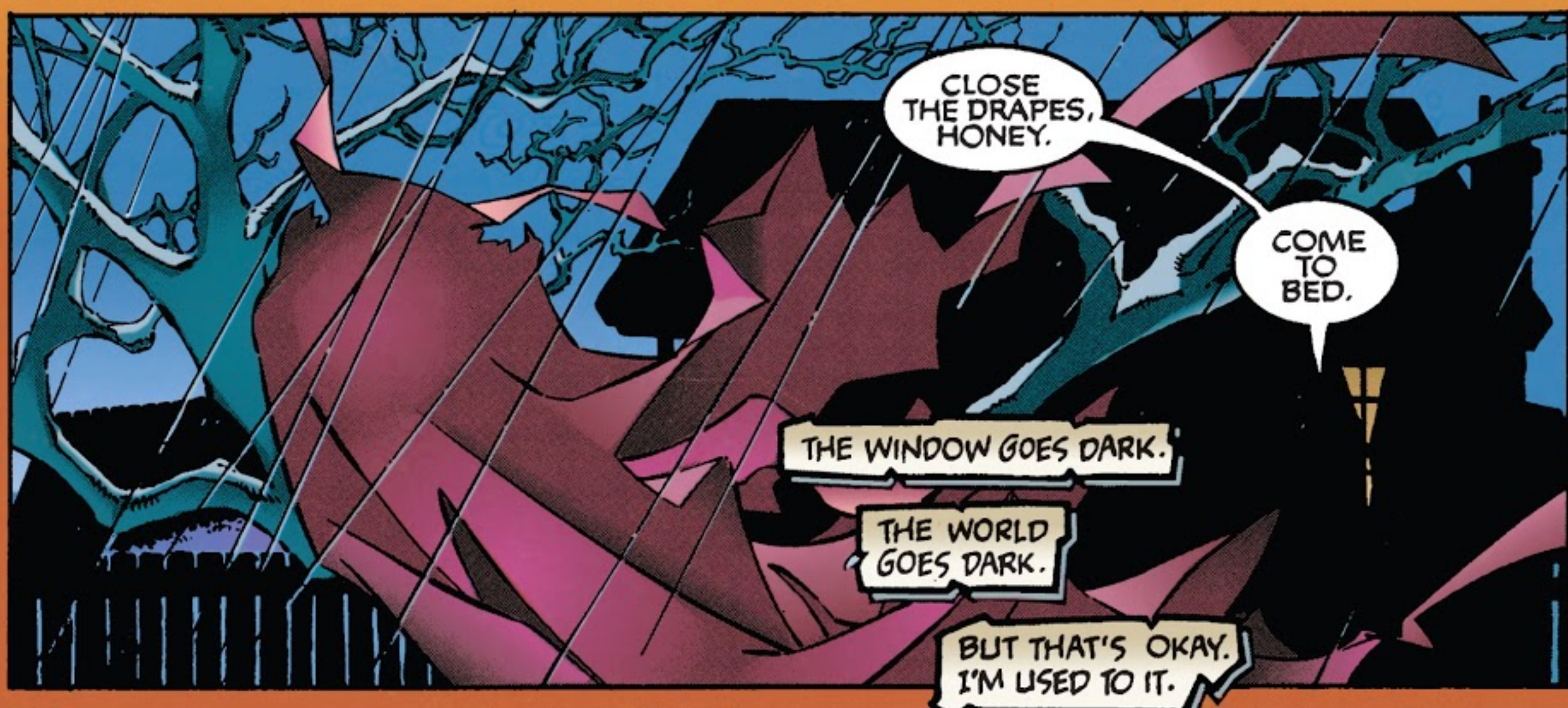


I JUST...
SOMETHING
JUST CAME INTO
MY HEAD.
I SEEMED TO
REMEMBER
SOMETHING...
AND THEN IT
WAS GONE...

IT
WAS...



I
LOVE
YOU.



CLOSE
THE DRAPES,
HONEY.

COME
TO
BED.

THE WINDOW GOES DARK.

THE WORLD
GOES DARK.

BUT THAT'S OKAY.
I'M USED TO IT.

DARKNESS
IS MY HOME
NOW.





®

SPAWN®

image

19
OCT

DIGITAL
EDITION



45
6

SUNDAY

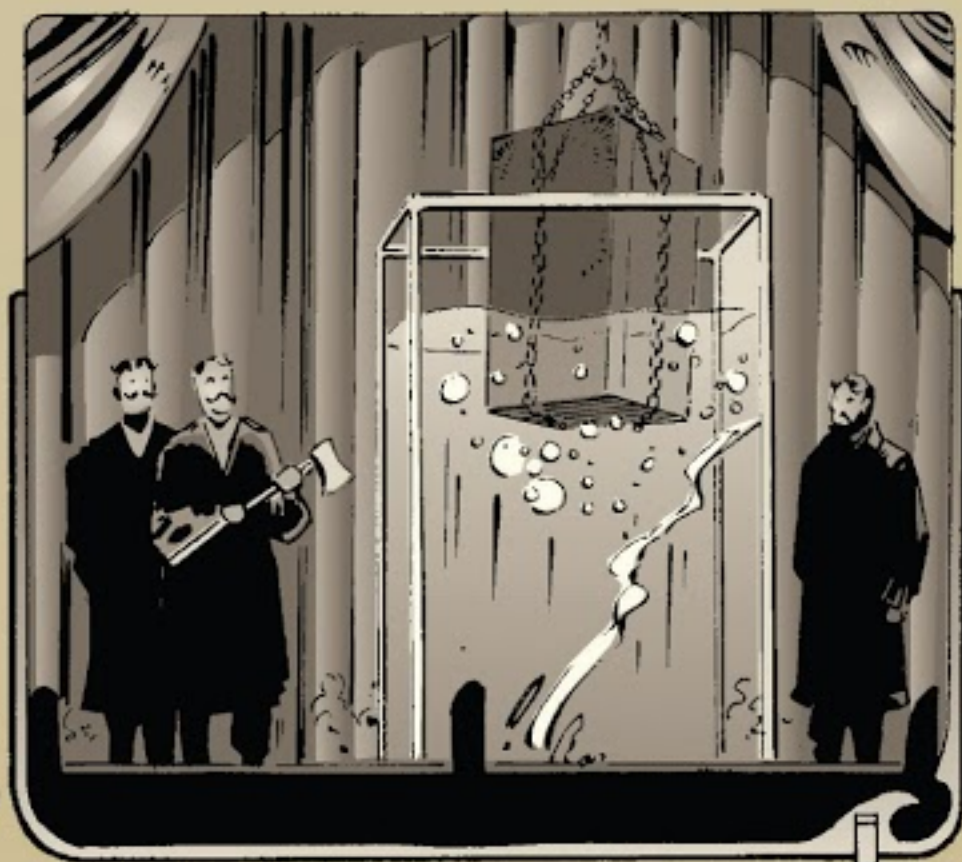
★ INDEPENDENT ★

LOS ANGELES ★

FIVE CENTS NOVEMBER 5 1916

NOVEMBER 5 1916

HOUDINI ASTOUNDS CAPACITY AU DEFIES 10 HANDCUFFS & STRAITJ CONCERNED POLICE ATTENTIVE



THE WAR IS NEARLY LOST.
WITH ALL OTHER OPTIONS
EXHAUSTED, THERE IS ONE
TACTIC YET UNTRIED.

MEN OF INFLUENCE FROM RELIGION, BUSINESS AND THE MILITARY FOCUS THEIR ENERGIES TO GAIN AID FROM THE ARMY OF A DIFFERENT EMPEROR...



... ONE OF
DARKNESS.

ELSEWHEN/WHERE...

QUICK! I
THINK SOME-
THING'S ABOUT
TO COME
THROUGH!



YOU'LL
BE GLAD I
FOUND THIS
WINDOW,
% ^ 2 !

"THEY'VE DONE IT! THEY'VE

"WE'RE DEFINITELY
REGISTERING INFERNAL
MATTER SIGNATURE

"A PITY THERE WASN'T THE TIME TO
SET UP ANY CONTROLS, OR SUFFICIENT
MEASUREMENT SCHEMES. WE ARE
FORTUNATE THAT YOU DISCOVERED
THIS EVENT WINDOW AT ALL.

"NOW, THE BOMB. I AM GLAD THESE
EARTHIAN'S FOUND A SECOND ONE
NECESSARY.

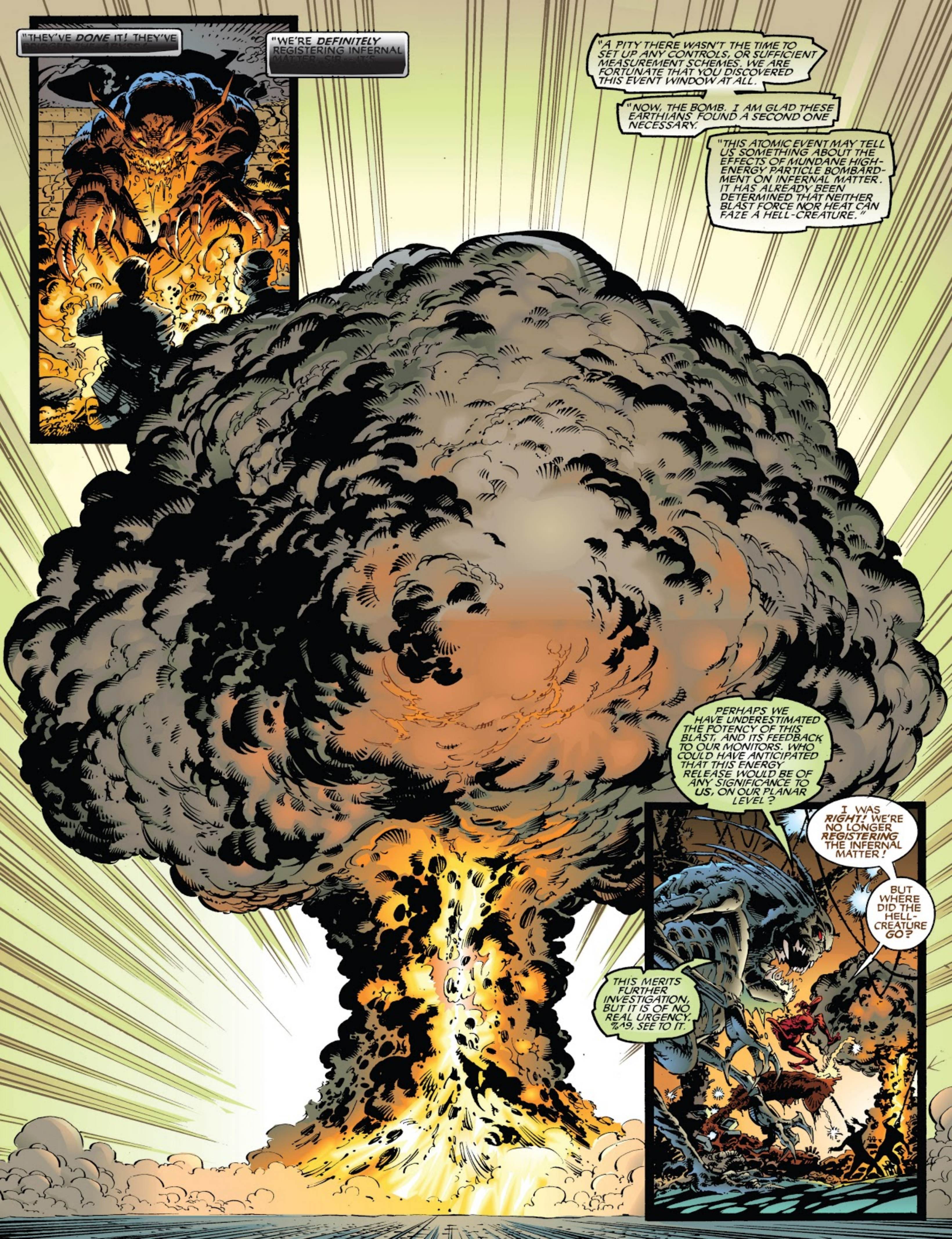
"THIS ATOMIC EVENT MAY TELL
US SOMETHING ABOUT THE
EFFECTS OF MUNDANE HIGH-
ENERGY PARTICLE BOMBARD-
MENT ON INFERNAL MATTER.
IT HAS ALREADY BEEN
DETERMINED THAT NEITHER
BLAST FORCE NOR HEAT CAN
FAZE A HELL-CREATURE."

PERHAPS WE
HAVE UNDERESTIMATED
THE POTENCY OF THIS
BLAST, AND ITS FEEDBACK
TO OUR MONITORS. WHO
COULD HAVE ANTICIPATED
THAT THIS ENERGY
RELEASE WOULD BE OF
ANY SIGNIFICANCE TO
US, ON OUR PLANAR
LEVEL?

I WAS
RIGHT! WE'RE
NO LONGER
REGISTERING
THE INFERNAL
MATTER!

BUT WHERE
DID THE
HELL-
CREATURE
GO?

THIS MERITS
FURTHER
INVESTIGATION,
BUT IT IS OF NO
REAL URGENCY.
%49, SEE TO IT.



SOMEWHERE IN
THE SOVIET UNION,
SEVERAL YEARS
AGO...

"STEADY."

"CLOSER.
THERE'S
YOUSEF
VOLOKHOV."

"INHALE."

"HOLD IT."

JUST
SQUEEZE...

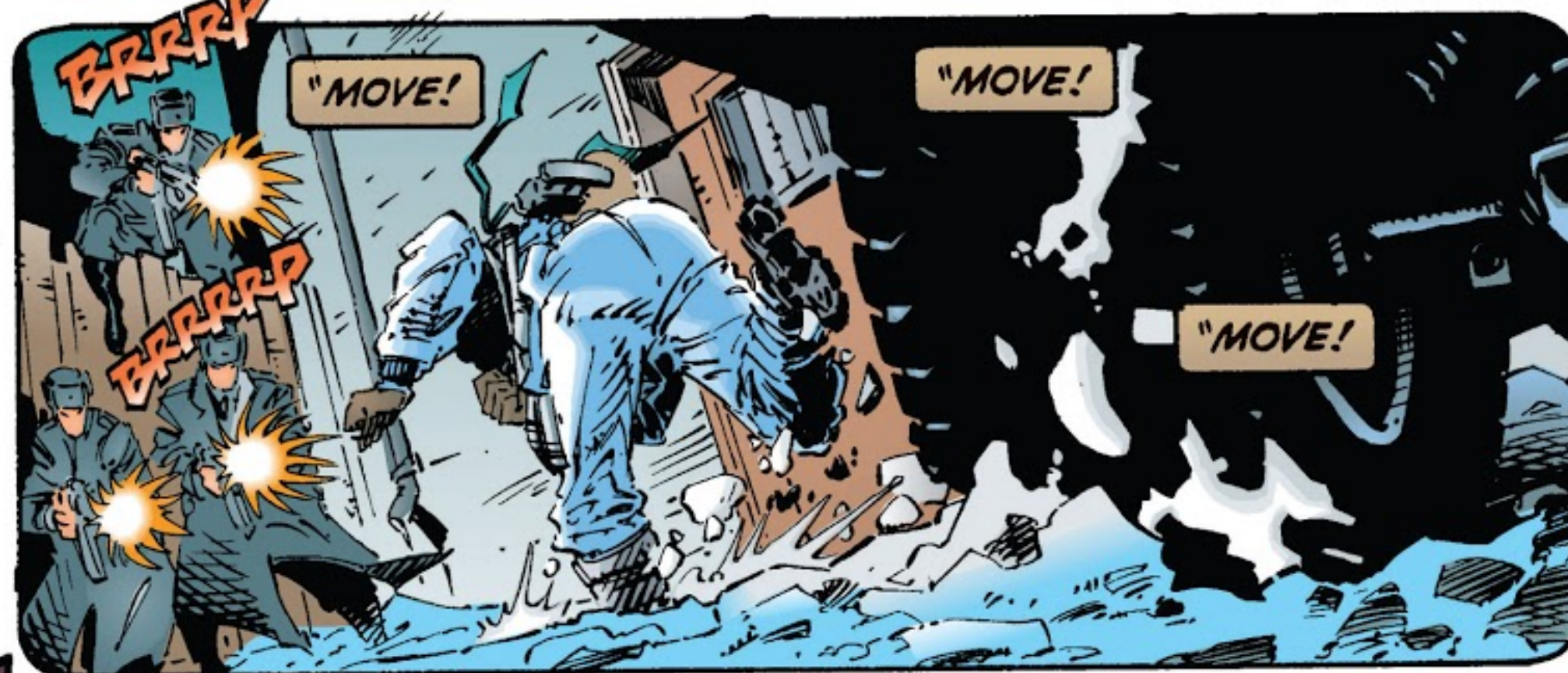
BUT
INSTEAD...

...THERE'S NO TIME TO
MAKE THE SHOT.

JEE-ZUS!

MOVE IT,
SIMMONS!

SPAK
SPAK
SPAK
SPAK
SPAK





RAARH!!

BUT IT WAS
JUST A PILE OF
RAGS! BUMS
DON'T DRESS IN
THOSE
COLORS!

O
GOD

O
GOD

O
GOD

O
GOD

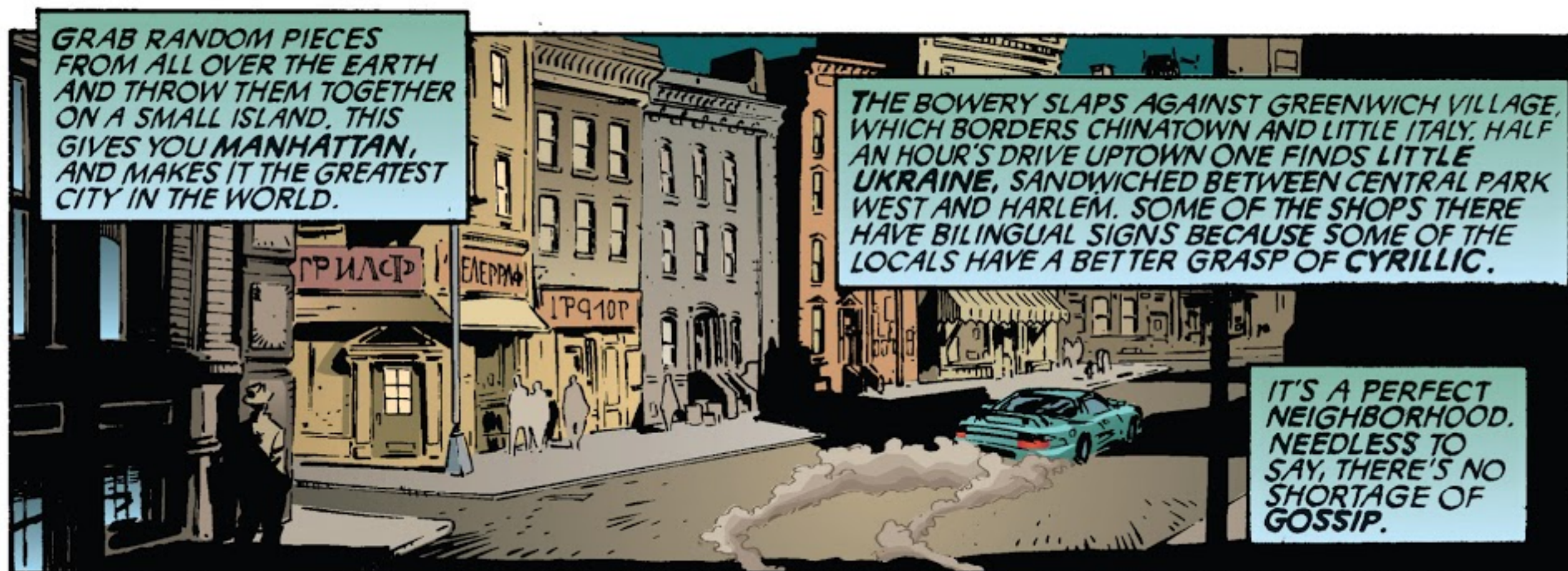
YOU'RE
MEAT!

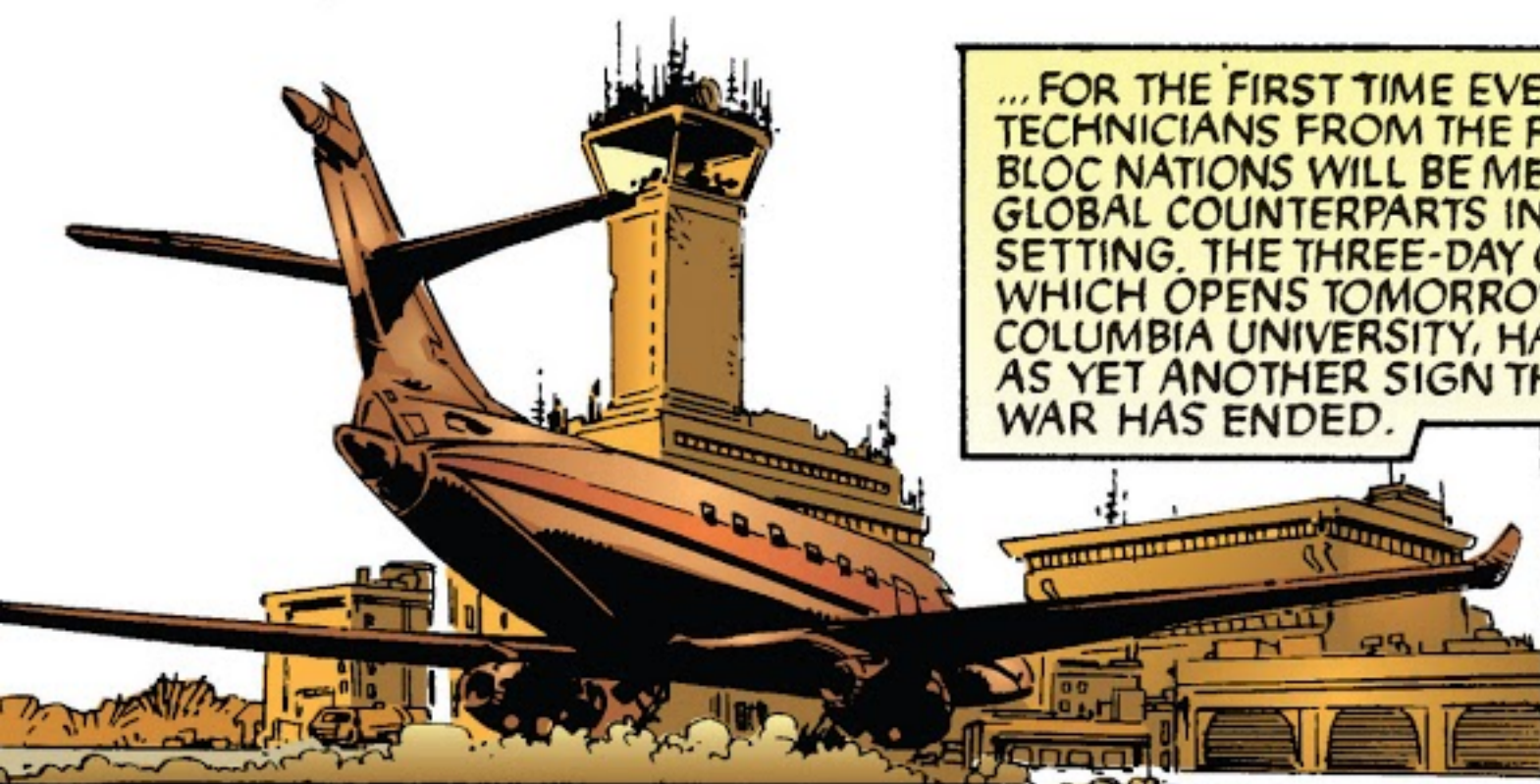
ULGK!

WE NEED
TO TALK,
HELL'S-PAWN.

I CAN'T
LET HIM
GET AWAY!
HE BLEW
ME UP!

DON'T WORRY
ABOUT IT. I
SNARED HIS WALLET,
AND WE CAN FIND HIM
LATER. FOR NOW, WE
HAVE MORE PRESSING
MATTERS TO
DISCUSS.





...FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER, NUCLEAR TECHNICIANS FROM THE FORMER SOVIET BLOC NATIONS WILL BE MEETING WITH THEIR GLOBAL COUNTERPARTS IN AN INFORMAL SETTING. THE THREE-DAY CONFERENCE, WHICH OPENS TOMORROW AT NEW YORK'S COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, HAS BEEN HAILED AS YET ANOTHER SIGN THAT THE COLD WAR HAS ENDED.



...AND IF YOU ASK ME, POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL ISSUES ASIDE, THESE GENTLEMEN NEED SOME *SERIOUS* FASHION ADVICE. FIRST TIME TO TOWN, FARMBOYS? I THINK MY GRANDFATHER WAS *BURIED* IN ONE OF THOSE SUITS. I HAVE A WORD OF ENGLISH THEY SHOULD ALL TAKE THE TIME TO LEARN: *ARMANI!*



...SO WHY IS IT THAT THESE GUYS FLEW *SIX THOUSAND MILES* TO BE TALKING ABOUT *A-BOMBS*? WE'RE NEVER GONNA *USE* THE DAMN THINGS. THIS IS ALL *PHOTO-OPPORTUNITY!* THE RANK AND FILE FOLKS OF THE UKRAINE ARE UP AGAINST OPPRESSIVE *UNEMPLOYMENT* AND HORRIBLE *INFLATION*. WHAT'S WORSE, THEY HAVE A RAMPANT PLAGUE OF *GANGSTER ACTIVITY!* WHY TALK ABOUT NUKES WHEN YOUR COUNTRY'S COURTING CERTAIN ECONOMIC *COLLAPSE*? IF THEY HAD ANY SENSE THEY'D *KEEP ON* SELLING US THEIR BOMBS INSTEAD OF SENDING THESE USELESS *HAS-BEENS* TO TALK ABOUT THE GOOD OLD DAYS. MAKES ME MISS THE COLD WAR. GET A NEW LIFE, GUYS.



HAULING LUGGAGE. ALWAYS LUGGAGE. THIRTY-ONE YEARS AGO, ANDREI ZLENKO LEFT HIS UKRAINIAN HOMELAND ON A TEMPORARY VISA, CARRYING WHAT LITTLE HE OWNED IN SHABBY SUITCASES. EVERY DAY, AT HIS JOB, HE IS REMINDED OF THAT EVENT. HE WONDERS IF HE WILL STILL BE CARRYING LUGGAGE IN THE AFTERLIFE.



AT THE TIME HE LEFT, HE'D HAD NO INTENTION OF RETURNING TO THE OLD COUNTRY. NOW, HE SOMETIMES FINDS HIMSELF LOOKING WHISTFULLY BACK ON THOSE SIMPLER DAYS... UNTIL HE REMEMBERS THE SECRET POLICE.

THAT MEMORY HAS BECOME MORE VIVID JUST NOW. HE RECOGNIZES THE CHEAP LUGGAGE, THE NAMES OF THE RUSSIAN CITIES ON THE TRAVEL STICKERS... AND THE WATCHFUL EYES. HIS OLD NEIGHBOR YOUSEF'S CONSPICUOUSLY STURDY CARRYING CASE SLIDES INTO VIEW.



THE UNIFORM OF HIS OVERSEER IS DIFFERENT, YET STILL A UNIFORM. DAMNED THUGS. A MAN CAN RISK ALL TO TRANSPORT HIMSELF TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD...



... AND THE WORST OF THE OLD LIFE CAN FIND A WAY TO FOLLOW.



NO MATTER. THE OVERSEER IS JUST A FORMALITY. YOUSEF IS AN OLD FRIEND, AND THAT FRIENDSHIP IS WORTH AT LEAST THIS SMALL FAVOR.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY. IT IS LATE ON A SATURDAY EVENING, THE SECOND DAY OF THE "EAST-WEST ATOMIC WARFARE, SCIENCE AND APPLICATIONS CONFERENCE."

SEVERAL SPEAKERS FROM THE EASTERN BLOC DECIDE TO SAMPLE THE REAL AMERICA-- ONE THAT DECADES OF SOVIET PROPOGANDA HAD BURNED INTO THEIR MINDS.

FAR FROM A WARNING, IT HAS BECOME A BEACON-- AN IDEAL.

<GENTLEMEN, WE HAVE ARRIVED.*>

<A TRULY MAGNIFICENT RESULT OF A FREE SOCIETY.>

<A TRULY MAGNIFICENT RESULT OF BREEDING, TOO.>

<LET US GO INSIDE AND DRINK.>

*TRANSLATED FROM RUSSIAN.

<YOU KNOW, IT IS SUCH A SHAME THAT OUR SCIENCE WILL NEVER BE PUT TO PRACTICAL USE.>

<YES, OURS IS A DYING PROFESSION. WHAT GOOD IS IT TO KNOW HOW TO DESTROY THE EARTH, IF WE NEVER GET THE CHANCE?>

<I DON'T KNOW. PERHAPS THERE WILL YET BE A USE FOR OUR KNOWLEDGE. CHEER UP!>



SEVERAL
ROUNDS
LATER...

<ANY SPY WORTH
HIS METTLE
WOULD LOVE OUR
FUSION DATA.
JUST TODAY I
WAS SPEAKING
WITH A
COLLEAGUE FROM
ISRAEL...>

<THEIR BOMBS ARE QUITE
EFFICIENT. A SHAME THAT
THEY MUST KEEP IT
SECRET.>

< I STILL
PREFER THE OLD,
TRIED AND TRUE
ATOMICS. THEY'RE
SO EASY TO JUST
DISMANTLE, PICK
UP AND TAKE
ANYWHERE
WITH YOU.>

< DID ANY
OF YOU MEET
KHADAFY'S
ENVOY? NOW
THERE IS A MAN
COULD MAKE US
ALL VERY WEALTHY,
I BET!>



< THIS IS MISHA. GET
ME STATION CHIEF
IVANOV. NOW.>



< OH
MAMA!>

< YOU WERE RIGHT.
LOUD, CRAZY TALK
GOT ONE OF OUR KGB
SHADOWS OUT OF THE
WAY, AND NOW THE
OTHER'S DISTRACTED.>

< LET'S HEAD FOR THE EXIT!>



< IDIOT! I
LEAVE FOR A
MOMENT AND
THEY SLIP
AWAY!>



< I'LL TRY TO NAB THEM! YOU
CALL IT IN, THIS TIME!>



< I WILL SEE
YOU BACK AT
THE CONFERENCE
TOMORROW. >

< BUT YOUSEF,
THERE ARE MORE
BARS TO VISIT.
WHERE ARE YOU
GOING? >

< TO SEE MY
EXPATRIATE
FRIENDS! >

ELSEWHEN/WHERE:



LITTLE
LIKE
COMING
UP.

THE PLACE IS KNOWN AS
THE OVERLAP. IT IS A
REALITY THAT INTERSECTS
ALL PLANES OF EXISTENCE.
IT IS THE BIRTHPLACE OF
WHAT'S CALLED MAGIC.

THERE ARE NO
SPIRITUAL OR
PHYSICAL LAWS
HERE. REALITY IS
ELASTIC HERE.

THE REALM IS INHABITED BY
POWERFUL BEINGS FROM A
MILLION MILLION WORLDS, AS
WELL AS FLORA, FAUNA AND
TERRAIN FROM THOSE PLACES,
ALL SCATTERED HAPHAZARDLY
ACROSS AN INFINITE BACKDROP.

EACH DENIZEN HAS HIS/HER/ITS
OWN PRIORITIES AND ASSIGNMENTS.
THE OVERLAP IS PRIMARILY A PLACE
OF **DISCOVERY** AND **EXPERIMENTA-**
TION-- A LABORATORY WITHOUT
BOUNDS.

ONE SUCH GROUP IS
MEETING NOW TO
DISCUSS THEIR
CURRENT FORAY INTO
HUMAN SPIRITUAL
SPACE-- AND THE
PHYSICS OF HELL.

THANKS FOR COMING. I COULDN'T BE MORE **EXCITED**, NOW THAT THINGS ARE **MOVING**!

I'VE BEEN KEEPING AN EYE ON THOSE EARTHIANs AND THEIR **ATOMIC** FETISH-- AND THEY HAVEN'T ALL **KILLED** EACH OTHER YET! SO, I'VE MANAGED TO PUSH THINGS IN A DIRECTION THAT'LL GIVE US SOME **ANSWERS** SOON.

OUR LAST SURVEY--WHERE A HELL-CREATURE WAS BLOWN UP-- WAS A **BUST**, BUT THAT'S OKAY. WE WEREN'T PREPARED FOR THAT EVENT THE WAY WE ARE **NOW**.

THIS TIME, I PLUGGED A **THOUGHT-PROGRAM** INTO A SCIENTIST THERE. HE'LL DETONATE AN ATOM BOMB AT A PRE-SET TIME. A DEMON, THE **LATEST** HELL'S-PAWN WILL BE NEAR **GROUND ZERO**.

WE'VE PLACED AN **AGENT** THERE WHO'LL MAKE SURE THAT THE CREATURE'S **IN PLACE**. WE KNOW THE STRENGTH OF THE BLAST, SO WE'VE TAKEN **VIEWING** PRECAUTIONS.

SO NOW--OUR **CONCLUSIVE** TEST TO DETERMINE IF ATOMICS CAN **KILL** DEMONS, AND IN THE PROCESS **SCATTER** THEIR INFERNAL MATTER!

AND THE BEST PART IS, THAT **PERSNICKETY PEST HOUDINI** IS THE **AGENT** ON THE SCENE! WE CLEAR UP **TWO** PROBLEMS AT **ONCE**!

AM I GOOD, OR WHAT?

I TRUST THAT THE PEST WILL VERIFY THE NATURE OF THE HELL-CREATURE'S POWERS AND TEMPERMENT FIRST. THAT WILL BE USEFUL INFORMATION SHOULD WE DECIDE TO WORK ON HELL IN THE FUTURE. THE PLACE IS RIPE FOR MANIPULATION.

HOUDINI IS USING ONE OF OUR PORTAL DEVICES. I TOLD HIM IT IS MORE EFFICIENT A TRANSPORT THAN MEDITATION, OR WHATEVER HIS USUAL METHOD. IN HIS CONFUSION OVER THE FAILURE OF OUR DEVICE, HE WILL NOT HAVE TIME TO ADJUST TO HIS NORMAL MODE OF TRANSFER, AND WILL PERISH.

BRILLIANT!

Hmm... BUT HE **ALWAYS** ESCAPES...



GREENWICH VILLAGE, HALF AN HOUR LATER...



THERE'S NO WAY I'M GOING TO BELIEVE YOU'RE HARRY HOUDINI.

WELL... YOU'RE A DEMON FROM HELL...!

AREN'T YOU DEAD OR SOMETHING?

AREN'T YOU?

I GET YOUR POINT. BUT THIS IS PRETTY HARD TO BELIEVE...

WHICH PART? THAT I'M A DIMENSION-TRAVELLING HYPER-MAGE TEN THOUSAND TIMES MORE POWERFUL THAN MY STAGE ACT LET ON, OR THAT YOU'RE AN INVULNERABLE, ULTRA-STRONG, HORRIBLE PUPPET OF HELL?

BOTH, I GUESS.

HOWEVER, I DIDN'T COME HERE TO DISCUSS OUR MUTUALLY UNBELIEVABLE CONDITIONS... I'M HERE TO SPEAK ABOUT YOU, HELL'S-PAWN... AND ABOUT YOUR POWERS.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT MY POWERS? YOU'RE JUST AN ESCAPE ARTIST.

JUST AN ESCAPE ARTIST? *JUST* AN ESCAPE ARTIST?! ARE YOU AWARE OF HOW MANY YEARS I'VE SPENT, NON-MAGICAL, GRUELING YEARS, LEARNING TO BE *JUST* AN ESCAPE ARTIST?!

GOOD-- I'VE TWEAKED HIS CURIOSITY.

AS IT TURNED OUT, THOSE LEVELS OF CONCENTRATION LED TO MY ACCIDENTAL EXTRA-DIMENSIONAL DISCOVERIES... THINGS BEYOND HOCUS-POCUS AND MERE SPIRITUALISM.

NOW I KNOW MAGIC. *REAL* MAGIC.

SO WHAT DID YOU SEE? AN ILLUSION? A SMOKE PELLET? TELEPORTATION?

THAT WAS *MAGIC*-- THAT I MOVED FROM POINT "A" TO POINT "B" IN A NON-MUNDANE MANNER. IT WAS THE *RESULT*, NOT THE *METHOD* THAT MATTERED.

DOES IT MATTER?

MAGIC IS ABOUT PERCEPTION AND THE WILL'S ABILITY TO **ALTER** THAT PERCEPTION, **USING ENERGIES** GATHERED FROM BEYOND THIS WORLD.

MAGIC IS LIKE TELLING A LIE SO CONVINCING THAT EVEN THE **UNIVERSE** BELIEVES YOU! AND **YOU**, MY FRIEND, ARE A CREATURE OF MAGIC, ALBEIT OF FINITE POWER. HOWEVER, YOU NEEDN'T EXHAUST **YOUR** POWER...

... THAT SYMBIOTIC COSTUME CAN DO MUCH OF YOUR WORK FOR YOU.

GOOD GOD! QUICK--
BEHIND YOU!

KLSSSKKKKK

YOU SEE? WITH ONLY A THOUGHT, YOUR **SUIT** ATTACKS FOR YOU. IT EXPENDS **ITS** ENERGY, NOT YOURS.

SKRAK!

NOW, IN THE CASE OF THIS **BOMB**...

...THE SUIT APPRECIATED THE THREAT AND ACTED TO KEEP YOU FROM HARM, WITHOUT YOUR CONSCIOUS DIRECTION. **YOUR** ENERGY EXPENDITURE? NONE.

AND THERE'S MORE.

YOUR MOST IMPORTANT POWER, AS A CREATURE OF SORCERY, IS **MANIFESTATION**. WITH A CLEAR HEAD AND A STRONG WILL YOU CAN CAUSE YOUR COSTUME TO MAKE JUST ABOUT ANYTHING, PROVIDED YOU UNDERSTAND ITS ESSENCE...

...ITS SIZE, THE WEIGHT, THE COLOR-- THAT SORT OF THING.

FOR EXAMPLE, THINK OF SOMETHING SMALL, LIKE A **MARBLE**.

YOU KNOW WHAT IT FEELS LIKE, LOOKS LIKE AND ALL. NOW FEEL YOUR DESIRE FOR SUCCESS FADE TO **SURENESS**. YOU **WILL** SUCCEED. LET THIS WILLPOWER ACTIVATE YOUR COSTUME. REACH OUT... THE MOLECULES ARE FLOATING FREE... GRAB THEM... THINK MARBLE ... GO ON...

...**MAKE** ONE!

A MARBLE...

OKAY...

Shoop

PRETTY CLOSE... WE'LL TRY AGAIN...

LOOKIE HERE, FELLAS! WE GOTTS US A REG-U-LAR **CIRCUS** ON OUR ROOF!

BRAINS, DIVVY... YOU AN' ME, WE TAKE THE RICH GUY IN THE **TUX**. LINK, TAKE THE **GEEK**.

YEAH... heh heh... YOU SAID IT, SMOKEY!

YEAH... heh heh. COME AN' **GET** ME.





WHAT THE
DEVIL CAME
OVER YOU?! YOU
MUTILATED THOSE
KIDS!

NOTHING
OF THE
SORT.

IT WAS
A VISIBLE
ILLUSION BASED
ON THEIR LUDICROUS
NICKNAMES. THEY'LL
SNAP OUT OF
IT SOON.

WHEREAS YOU, MY
FRIEND, WERE POSITIVELY
BRUTAL.

YOUR POWERS...

YEAH, MY
POWERS. HOW IS IT
THAT YOU AND EVERYONE
ELSE I MEET KNOWS SO
MUCH ABOUT ME-- AND
I KNOW SQUAT?

YOU'D KNOW
MORE ABOUT
YOURSELF IF YOU'D
TRY SOMETHING **NEW**
EVERY NOW AND
AGAIN.

YOUR
ABILITIES ARE
VAST, YET YOU'RE
STILL THINKING
LIKE A **MORTAL**.

WHAT ARE
YOU THEN,
HOTSHOT?

YES! I'VE GOT HIM!
UNLIKE YOU,
I'M JUST HUMAN.
WHEN AND
WHERE I COME FROM, I PLAY
THE ESCAPE ARTIST. PART OF
MY TIME, THOUGH, IS SPENT
IN THE HEART OF MAGIC, **THE
OVERLAP**, WHERE I'M A
PRANKSTER, AN ANNOYANCE.
FOR YOU, I'M THE TICKET
TO **KNOWLEDGE**.

AND SPEAKING OF
TICKETS... I'M
TAKING YOU TO A
SHOW BEYOND
YOUR WILDEST
DREAMS.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
EAST-WEST
ATOMIC CON.
THREE DAY
GENERAL ADMISSION
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
PRESENTS
THE EAST-WEST
ATOMIC & APPLICAT
SCIENCE CONFERENCE
ALL THREE
DAYS
GENERAL SEATING

FIRST THOUGH, YOU'LL NEED
TO BE LESS CONSPICUOUS. PUT
THIS ON, AND TONE THAT
COSTUME DOWN, THERE'S
A GOOD FELLOW.

EVER
DRIVEN
A **ROLLS**
BEFORE?

AT THAT
MOMENT,
THREE
STORIES
BELOW...

...SPLATTER
'EM ALL
WITH
PAINT...

...WHY DON'T
THOSE
CREEPS JUST
TAKE THE
HINT AND
LEAVE?

STICK
AROUND,
MY BOY,
AND SOON
YOU'LL BE
ABLE TO DO
THIS WITH
A FLICK
OF THE
WRIST--

AND THEN,
BELOW...

IT'S THAT
DAMN KID
AGAIN!

ANNOYING
WHELP.

THIS
TIME,
HE'S
TOAST!

RIGHT
BEHIND
YOU, HELL'S-
PAWN.

I'M
GONNA
NAIL THAT
PUNK TO THE
WALL WITH
HIS OWN
BONES!

I'M
GONNA...
**I'M
GONNA**
...!

DRIVE.

QUEENS, NEW YORK-- THE HOME OF SPAWN'S WIDOW, WANDA BLAKE, HER HUSBAND, TERRY FITZGERALD, AND THEIR DAUGHTER, CYAN.

A BLISSFUL SUBURBAN SUNDAY MORNING, JUST MINUTES PAST FIVE...

zkXZZX

THREE GUYS CAME BACK, ONE GUY AT LARGE, SO WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL? DO YOU SERIOUSLY THINK ANYONE WOULD BE ABLE TO SMUGGLE IN AN **ATOMIC DEVICE**?

YEAH, THE CUSTOMS CREW AT JFK AREN'T ALL THEY COULD BE... SO WHAT DO YOU WANT **ME** TO DO ABOUT IT?! PERCY, C'MON, MY JOB IS TO **READ** RUSSIAN, NOT **SPEAK** IT!...

DAMMIT, PERCY, I'M NO FIELD AGENT!... Ok, NOW I **AM**? YOU DON'T **PAY** ME FOR THAT!

ALL RIGHT --*sigh*-- GIVE ME AN HOUR-- BUT YOU EXPLAIN IT TO MY WIFE.

SAME TO YOU 'BYE.

Huh--
->COUGH->
HELLO--
YEAH, PERCY, WHAT THE HECK--
NOW?! YEAH...

WHY COULDN'T THE K.G.B. HANDLE THIS?...
Ok. THEY **COULDN'T** HANDLE IT. SO...

YES, I'VE GOT ALPHA-FIVE-ALPHA CLEARANCE... YOU'RE SERIOUS?

Whunk...?

IT'S A NEW SCHEDULE THING, HONEY. I HAVE TO WORK OVERTIME **BEFORE** MY SHIFT, THIS TIME.

GOTTA GO.

...DID HE SAY...
ATOMIC DEVICE...?



IN TWO WEEKS:

ATOMIC DEVICE!





TM

SPAWN

image

**20
NOV**

DIGITAL
EDITION



Ah, my demonic friend, there are so *MANY* things to teach you about magic.

Like how the heck you're making this car defy gravity?

Defy gravity? Nonsense! I've simply convinced gravity that the car is lighter than air. We've become like a dirigible, propelled by our own exhaust.

You can't *defy* a law of physics. Magic works *with* the natural world, not against it.

It doesn't sound so natural to me.

That's why I am teaching you.

Wait! I see the punk down there!

FOLLOWING HIS MURDER, AL SIMMONS WAS REBORN AS THE DEMONIC SPAWN. HE NOW FACES A WORLD THAT'S CHANGED IN UNEXPECTED WAYS... AND HIS OWN NEW ABILITIES, JUST AS UNEXPECTED AND MYSTERIOUS.

THE LATE NIGHT SILENCE OF MANHATTAN'S LITTLE UKRAINE IS CUT BY THE ROAR OF THE BOMBER'S SPEEDING CAR.

UNKNOWN TO HIM, A DEMON AND HIS NEW-FOUND MENTOR ARE IN SILENT PURSUIT.

I WONDER WHO HE'S MEETING HERE.

MAN, THAT WAS THE BEST ONE YET!

GOTTA CATCH THE NEWS-- SEE IF I MADE IT THIS TIME!

HE'S GOTTA BE WORKING FOR THE MOB OR SOMEONE.

WHO CARES? WE CAN GET HIM LATER.

I'VE GOT TWO INVITES TO THE MAGICIANS' CLUB FOR SOME AFTER-HOURS FUN. ONE OF THEIR BOYS HAS A TRUNK OF MINE I'D LIKE TO LOOK IN ON. COMING?

THE HECK WITH THAT! I'M STICKING TO THIS KID LIKE GLUE!

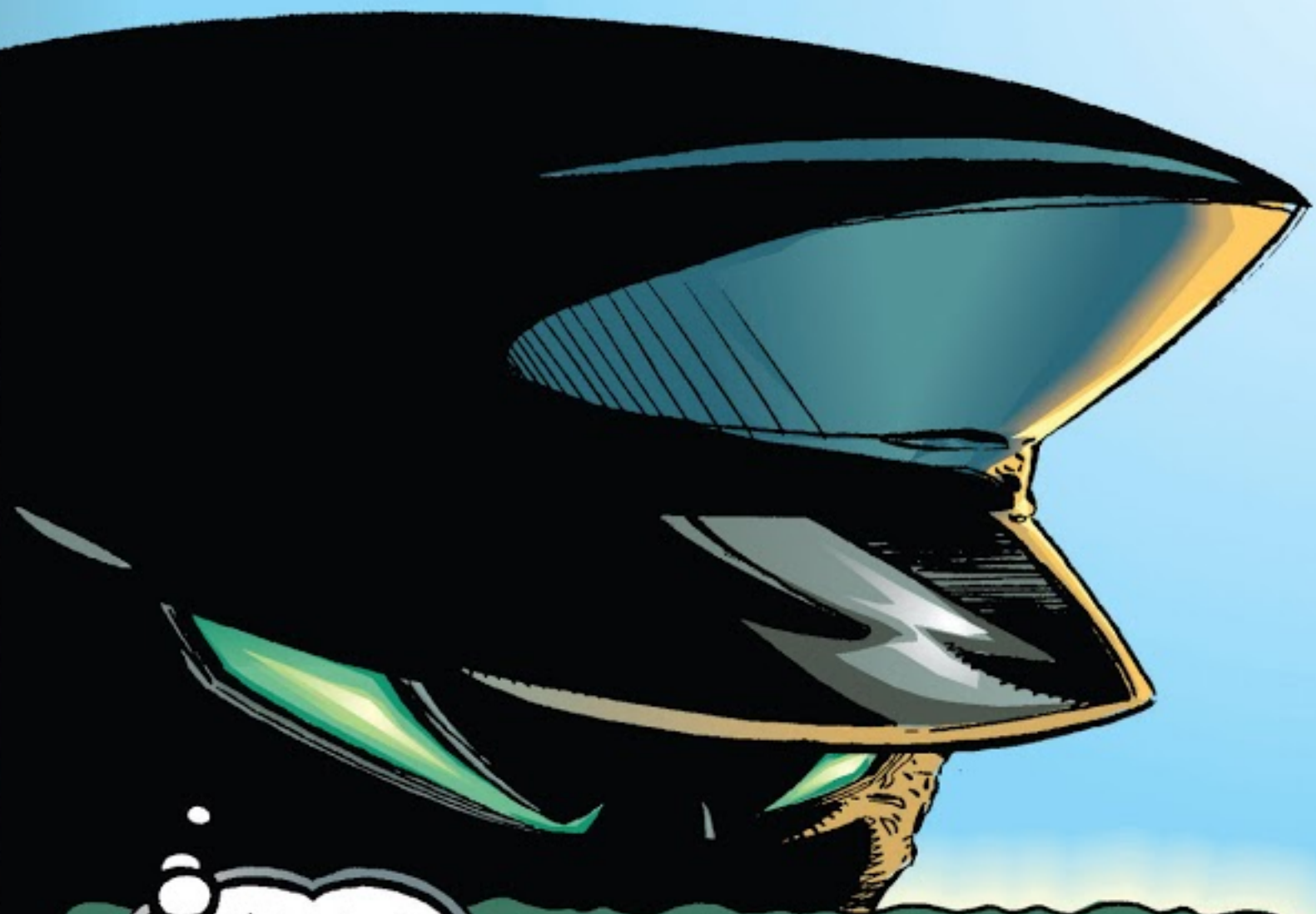
SOMETHING'LL TURN UP.

SUIT YOURSELF. I'LL SEE YOU IN A FEW HOURS.

TIME PASSES SLOWLY... BUT WHEN HE WAS ALIVE AND A SOLDIER, AL SIMMONS WAS USED TO WAITING.



CYRILLIC
WRITING ON
THESE SIGNS...
TAKES ME
BACK.



MÓNTEREY,
CALIFORNIA...
LANGUAGE
IMMERSION SCHOOL.
QUITE A FEW YEARS
AGO. I DON'T
KNOW HOW I GOT
THROUGH IT.

GOOD
THING I HAD
A BUDDY'S
PAPERS TO READ.
THAT'S WHEN
I MET--

--TERRY!
THAT'S HIS
VOICE DOWN
THERE!



<EXCUSE ME PLEASE,
GENTLEMEN. I AM
SPECIAL AGENT
FITZGERALD, WITH
THE U.S. GOVERN-
MENT. MAY I
ASK YOU SOME
QUESTIONS?> *

WHAT'S
HE
DOING
HERE?

Uh-oh--
TROUBLE!

<BUT
OF COURSE.
COME WITH
US, PLEASE.
IT IS
WARMER
INSIDE.>

*TRANSLATED
FROM RUSSIAN.



<YOUR
ACCENT NEEDS
PRACTICE,
LITTLE SPY.
LET US TEACH
YOU.>



HURGH!



SKAATSSHHH

LEAVE
HIM
ALONE!

KLOK!

THAT'S MY
FRIEND!

SPT
SPT
SPT
SPT
SPT

ULP!

**KLINK
NK
NK**



IF IT WOULD
HURT
YOU MORE, I'D
KILL
YOU!

C'MON,
TERRY,
LET'S GO.

WHAT'S
THIS SAY...
YOUSEF
VOLOKHOV...
JEEZ! I AL-
MOST BAGGED
HIM YEARS
AGO!

WHAT'S
HE GOT
TO DO WITH
THIS
MESS?

SAYS
HE'S HERE
FOR SOME
WEAPONS
CONFERENCE
AND WENT
AWOL. BUT
WHERE--



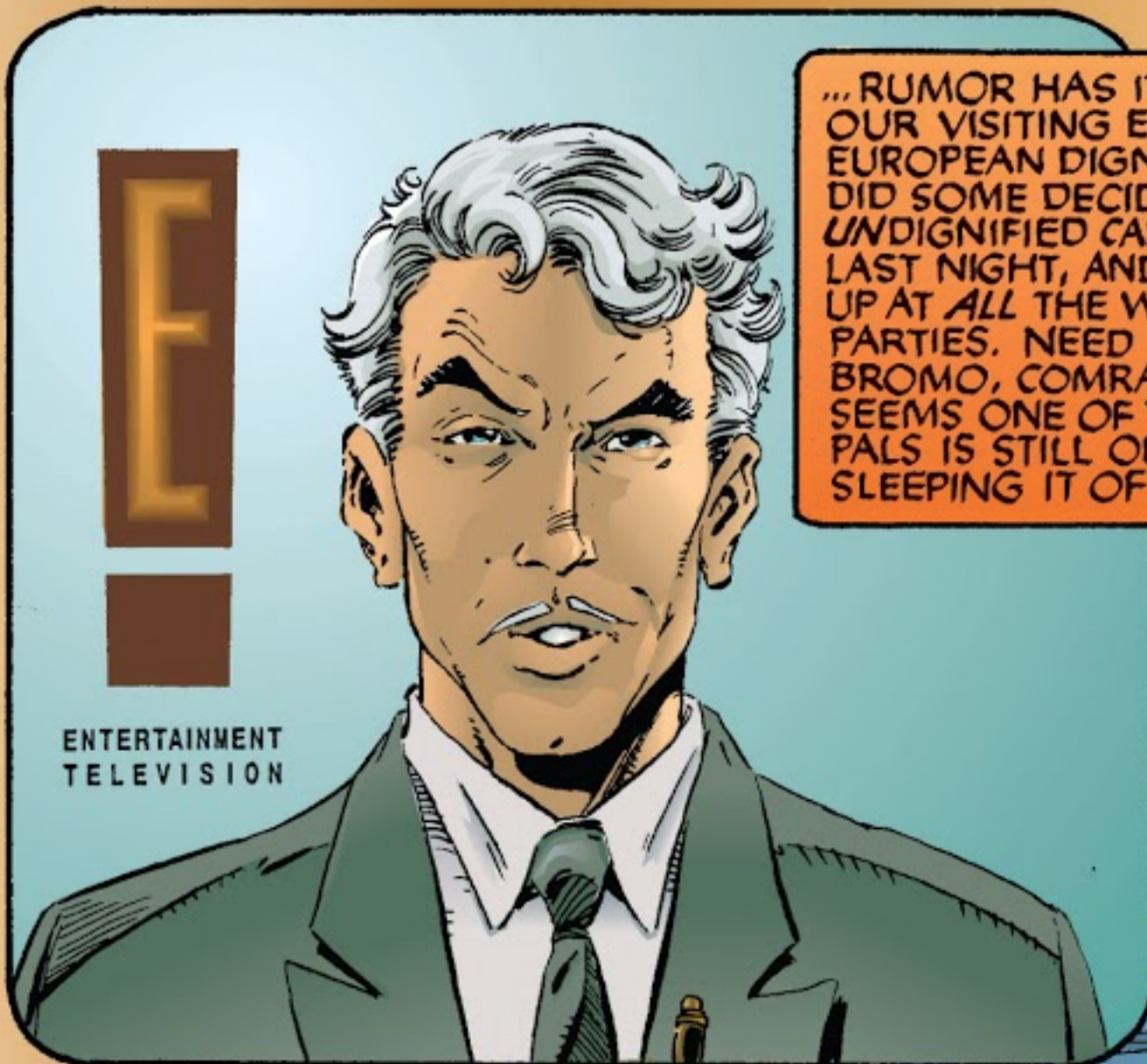
GO EASY
THERE, TERRY.
LEAN ON THIS
CAR.

WHAAAT??
THAT'S VOLOKHOV
IN FRONT OF THE
PUNK'S BUILDING,
OR I'M NOT DEAD!!
I KNEW THIS
THING STANK,
BUT NOT THIS
BAD!

NNNGGGHHH...



WHAT-
EVER IT IS,
THIS AGENT
HAS GOT AN
UNFINISHED
DUTY TO
EXECUTE!



...RUMOR HAS IT THAT OUR VISITING EASTERN EUROPEAN DIGNITARIES DID SOME DECIDEDLY **UNDIGNIFIED** CAROUSING LAST NIGHT, AND SHOWED UP AT **ALL** THE WRONG PARTIES. NEED A BROMO, COMRADES? SEEMS ONE OF YOUR PALS IS STILL OUT SLEEPING IT OFF.



ugh
WHAT HIT ME? WHAT WAS **UP** WITH THOSE GUYS?

CAN'T LET TERRY KNOW WHO I AM...NOT YET.



...YUSEF VOLOKHOV, A VISITING SCIENTIST FROM THE **EAST-WEST ATOMIC WARFARE, SCIENCE AND APPLICATIONS CONFERENCE**, IS STILL UNACCOUNTED FOR. SOURCES CLOSE TO THE NYPD HAVE INFORMED US OF A MAJOR SEARCH FOR THE MISSING TECHNICIAN. FOUL PLAY HAS NOT BEEN RULED OUT.



I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT. THANKS, MISTER, FOR PULLIN' MY SKILLET OUT OF THE FIRE.

Y'KNOW, BROTHER, YOU MIGHT WANT TO BE MORE CAREFUL WITH THE PEOPLE AROUND HERE.

I'LL NEVER LET WANDA BECOME A WIDOW AGAIN.



IF YOU ASK ME, IT'S ALL ABOUT **MONEY**. THE RUSSIANS HAVE ALL THE ROMANCE AND LIMELIGHT OF BIG CHANGES. WHAT GETS LOST IN THE SHUFFLE IS THAT THE **OTHER** EX-SOVIET REPUBLICS ARE ALSO STRUGGLING FOR A NEW SYSTEM. **THEY** NEED MONEY, **TOO!** THE UKRAINE, WHERE VOLOKHOV IS FROM, COULD USE EVEN A **FIFTH** OF THE AID THAT HAS BEEN PROMISED TO RUSSIA.



PERCIVAL ISSACSEN-SMYTHE, PLEASE...

FITZGERALD, TERENCE D., A5A-923777...

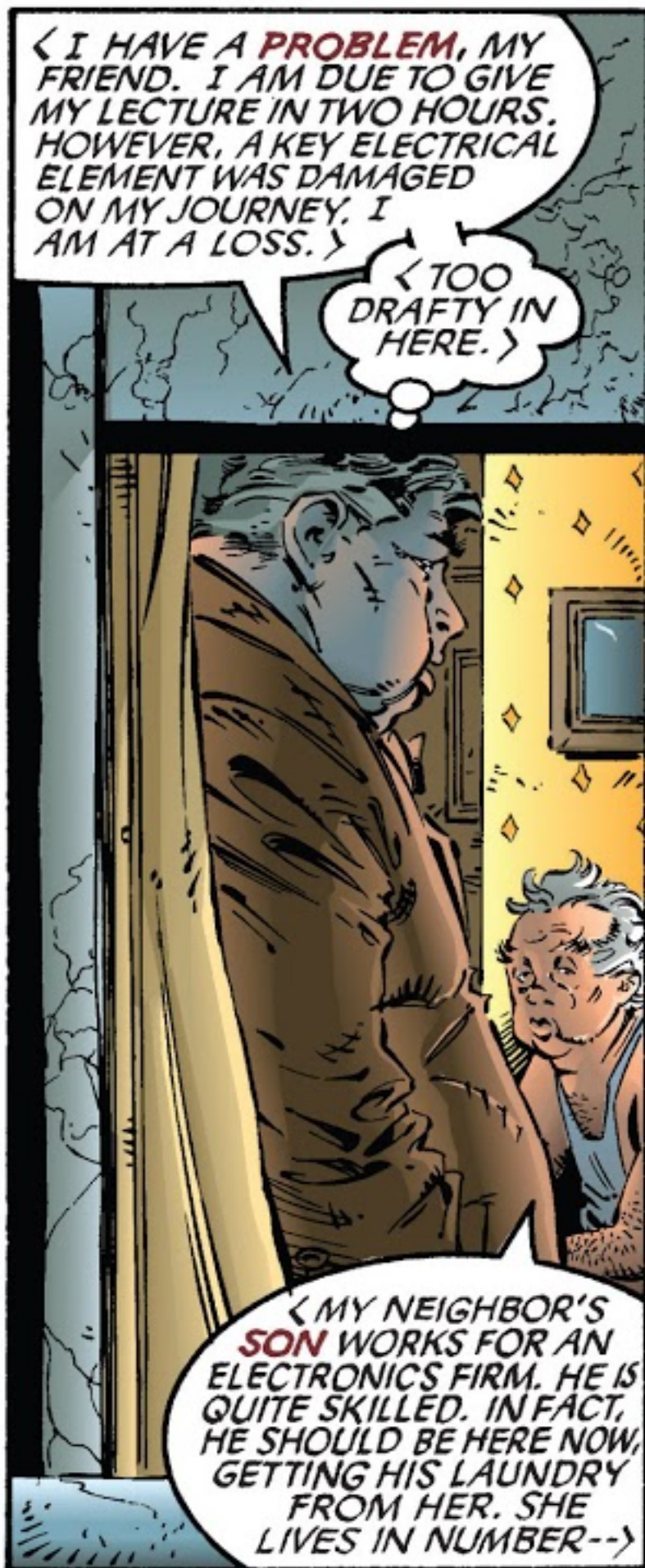
YO, PERCY. I JUST GOT THE BEJEESUS KICKED OUT OF ME. NAH, SOME **MATCH-CRISP** DUDE HELPED ME OUT.

...NO, NO, WHAT I **NEED** IS FOR YOU TO ROLL ME DOWN SOME MUSCLE, **STAT**. THAT'S **RIGHT**, YOU BIT OFF MORE THAN I CAN CHEW!

< I HAVE A **PROBLEM**, MY FRIEND. I AM DUE TO GIVE MY LECTURE IN TWO HOURS. HOWEVER, A KEY ELECTRICAL ELEMENT WAS DAMAGED ON MY JOURNEY. I AM AT A LOSS. >

< TOO DRAFTY IN HERE. >

< MY NEIGHBOR'S **SON** WORKS FOR AN ELECTRONICS FIRM. HE IS QUITE SKILLED. IN FACT, HE SHOULD BE HERE NOW, GETTING HIS LAUNDRY FROM HER. SHE LIVES IN NUMBER-->



<-- 212, DOWNSTAIRS. LET US GO TALK TO THE BOY. >

THUMP

ATOMIC WEAPONS? I **KNEW** THERE WAS MORE HERE THAN MEETS THE EYE! I DON'T KNOW WHO THE KID'S WORKING FOR, THOUGH.

THIS MUST BE **BIG**. TERRY'S CALLED IN SOME GOONS.



SO WHAT HAPPENED HERE?

ACTUALLY, I WOKE UP OUTSIDE.

HOW LONG AGO DID VOLOKHOV LEAVE?

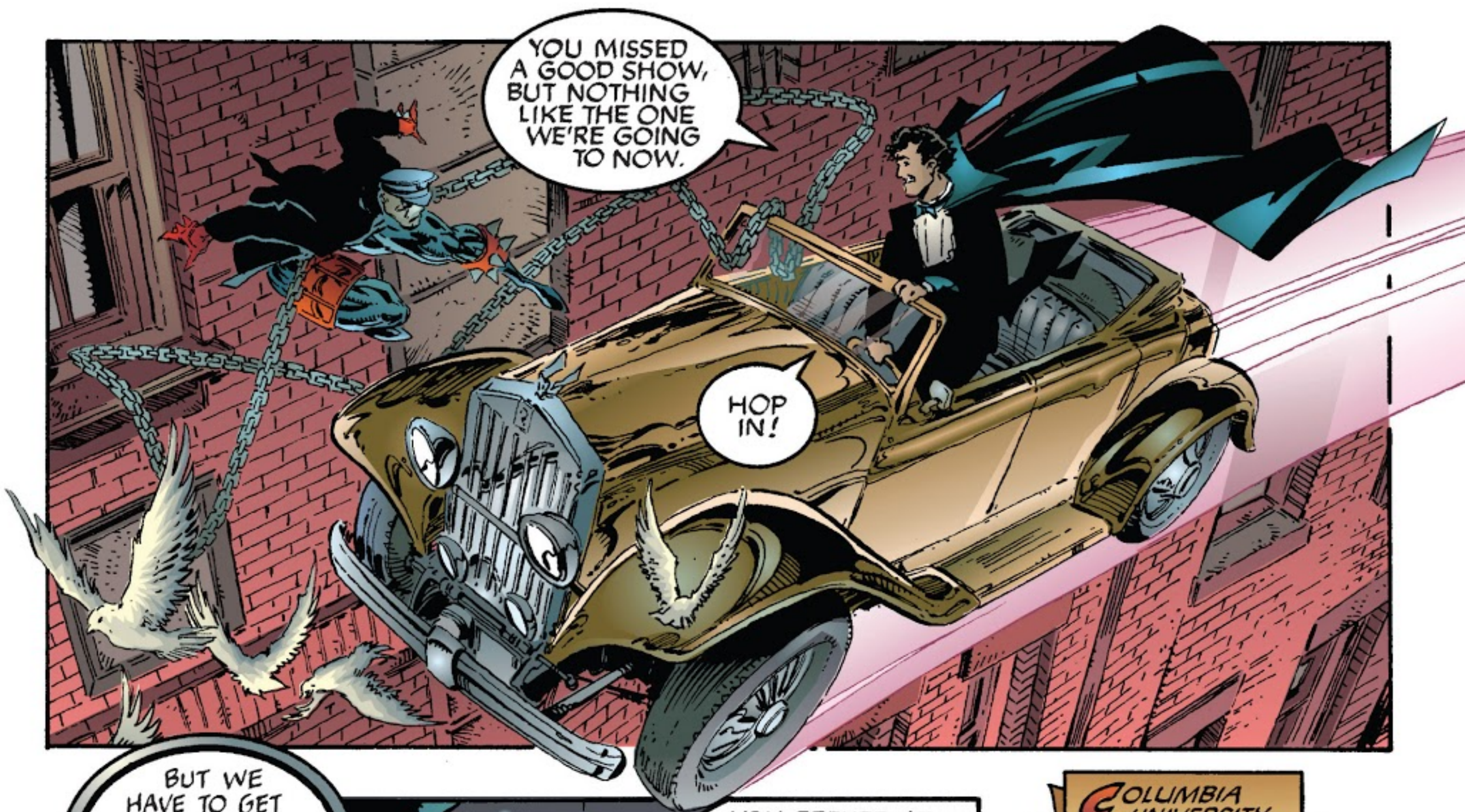
I DO NOT KNOW. HE WENT TO THE UNIVERSITY.



WHAT ABOUT THESE BOZOS? YOU'RE IN CHARGE HERE.

I'M NOT HURT... FORGET THEM. WE HAVE TO GET TO COLUMBIA, A.S.A.P.





YOU MISSED
A GOOD SHOW,
BUT NOTHING
LIKE THE ONE
WE'RE GOING
TO NOW.

HOP
IN!

BUT WE
HAVE TO GET
TO COLUMBIA
UNIVERSITY! SOME-
THING DANGEROUS
IS GOING ON!

YOU PEEKED AT
THESE, DIDN'T YOU?
I GOT THEM FROM
THE KID'S WALLET--
FRONT ROW,
CENTER!

I **KNEW**
IT! THE KID
WORKS FOR THE
COMMIES!

COLUMBIA
UNIVERSITY...
DAY THREE OF
THE CONFERENCE.



WHAT EXACTLY IS VOLOKHOV GOING TO
BE SPEAKING ABOUT?

DEMONSTRATION
OF AN ATOMIC
DETONATOR.

WE HAVE TO
GET IN THERE.
WE'RE WITH THE
GOVERNMENT...

... F.B.I. ...

... N.R.C. ...

... uh, SECRET
SERVICE...

NOT TO DIGRESS,
GENTLEMEN, BUT IF
YOU'RE NOT FACULTY,
THAT'LL BE SIX
BUCKS EACH.

WAIT A
MINUTE...
WHAT DOES
HE MEAN,
"DEMONSTRATION
OF AN
ATOMIC
DETONATOR"
?



IT IS A SURPRISINGLY LARGE TURN-OUT FOR THE DRY TOPIC AT HAND. ONLY THE CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS OR DEVOUT WEAPONRY WONKS WOULD BE INTERESTED IN FINELY ENGINEERED ATOMIC DETONATORS.

THEY WON'T BE DISAPPOINTED.

THE AUDIENCE GROWS QUIET AS YOUSEF VOLOKHOV, A PIONEER OF THE FORMER SOVIET UNION'S ATOMIC PROGRAM, WALKS TO THE PODIUM.

THIS IS HIS PROUD-EST MOMENT. HE HAS SPENT OVER FORTY YEARS IN TOP-SECRET RESEARCH. NOW, AT LAST, HE CAN GAIN THE EYES AND EARS OF THE WORLD.

BUT THERE IS ANOTHER REASON FOR YOUSEF TO BE HERE. HIS OBJECTIVE IS NOT RECOGNITION. THE WELL-BEING OF HIS COUNTRY, THE UKRAINE, IS HIS SOLE CONCERN.

THE MOMENT IS AT HAND. MEMBERS OF THE AUDIENCE SMILE IN RECOGNITION. THERE'S NO MISTAKING THE CHROMIUM STEEL OBJECT FOR ANYTHING BUT WHAT IT IS:

... AN ATOMIC BOMB.

THE BRIEFCASE IS HANDED GINGERLY TO YOUSEF.

KLIK

HE WITH-DRAWS A SHIELDED CONTAINER.

IN IT IS ENOUGH PLUTONIUM FOR A BOMB WHICH COULD LEVEL A GOOD-SIZED SECTION OF A CITY...

...THIS CITY.

THE AUDIENCE REACTS, EITHER IN TERROR OR GIGGLING ANTICIPATION. THEN, ABRUPTLY, THE GUNS MAKE IT ALL REAL.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, DISTINGUISHED COLLEAGUES. YOU CANNOT DOUBT WHAT YOUR EYES ARE SHOWING YOU. IT IS *INDEED* AN ATOMIC BOMB. IT IS NOW *PRIMED*.

RATHER THAN MY LECTURE, I WILL NOW PRESENT MY *DEMANDS*.

MY UKRAINE HAS LANGUISHED IN *POVERTY* WHILE HER COUSIN RUSSIA HAS GAINED ALL THE ATTENTION OF THE WORLD. IT IS TIME FOR THIS TO *END*.

YOU AND YOUR GOVERNMENTS SHALL LOAN MY UKRAINE 1.5 BILLION DOLLARS-- ONE BILLION PER KILOTON OF MY DEVICE HERE-- OR I SHALL *DESTROY* NEW YORK CITY.

KA-CHIK!

GUNS! EVERYBODY GET DOWN!!

ATOMIC TERRORISTS! PERCY WAS RIGHT! HO-LEE--!

CAN'T GET A CLEAR LINE OF FIRE!

GUNS! COMMIES WITH GUNS!!

... AND SORCERER WITH BIGGER GUN.

THE OVERLAPERS HAVE COME BEFORE THE PRIME, BY FAR THE OLDEST OF THE CREATURES DWELLING HERE, AND LINKED DIRECTLY INTO THE LIVING REALM ITSELF.

ALL DATA, GATHERED FROM A BILLION UNIVERSES, IS FED DIRECTLY THROUGH THIS CREATURE SO THAT THE OVERLAP MAY BE NOURISHED, AND THRIVE. SO IT HAS BEEN FOREVER.

COME FORTH AND SPEAK TO ME, MY EYES AND EARS.

MOST GRACIOUS SUPERIOR, OUR NEW EXPERIMENTS GO WELL.

THE BOMB...

WE WILL SOON LEARN IF IT IS POSSIBLE TO DESTROY A HELL-CREATURE WITH ATOMIC BOMBARDMENT. OUR EXPERIMENT WILL PROVIDE US WITH MUCH-NEEDED DATA ON THE PHYSICAL EXTREMES THE CREATURES OF EARTHIAN HELL CAN WITHSTAND.

TELL HIM ABOUT THE BOMB...

YES, YES. WE HAVE INSINUATED AN EARTHIAN PARTICLE-SPLITTING DEVICE. AND WITH THAT, WE HAVE ALSO CONDEMNED THAT MEDDLER HOUDINI TO HIS END.

VERY GOOD. PROCEED. I AM CERTAIN YOU WILL HAVE FRESH KNOWLEDGE TO FEED US. HOWEVER, THIS HOUDINI IS YOUR OWN AFFAIR.

YES, MY SUPERIOR. YOU SHALL BE WELL-FED...

...AND THE OVERLAP SHALL CELEBRATE THE TRIUMPH OF OUR NEW INFORMATION!

WHILE, ON EARTH, THE TEST CONTINUES...

PLEASE, EVERYONE TO REMAIN CALM. YOUR GUNS WILL NOT STOP US.

!!!

ALWAYS THE PERFORMER, HOUDINI STARTS THE SHOW WITH A SHOT INTO THE AIR.

KOOM

FRAYED NERVES SNAP. INSTINCT DIRECTS SHOTS AT THE ONLY FAMILIAR TARGET: SPECIAL AGENT FITZGERALD.

BLAM

JEE-ZUS!

Noooo!

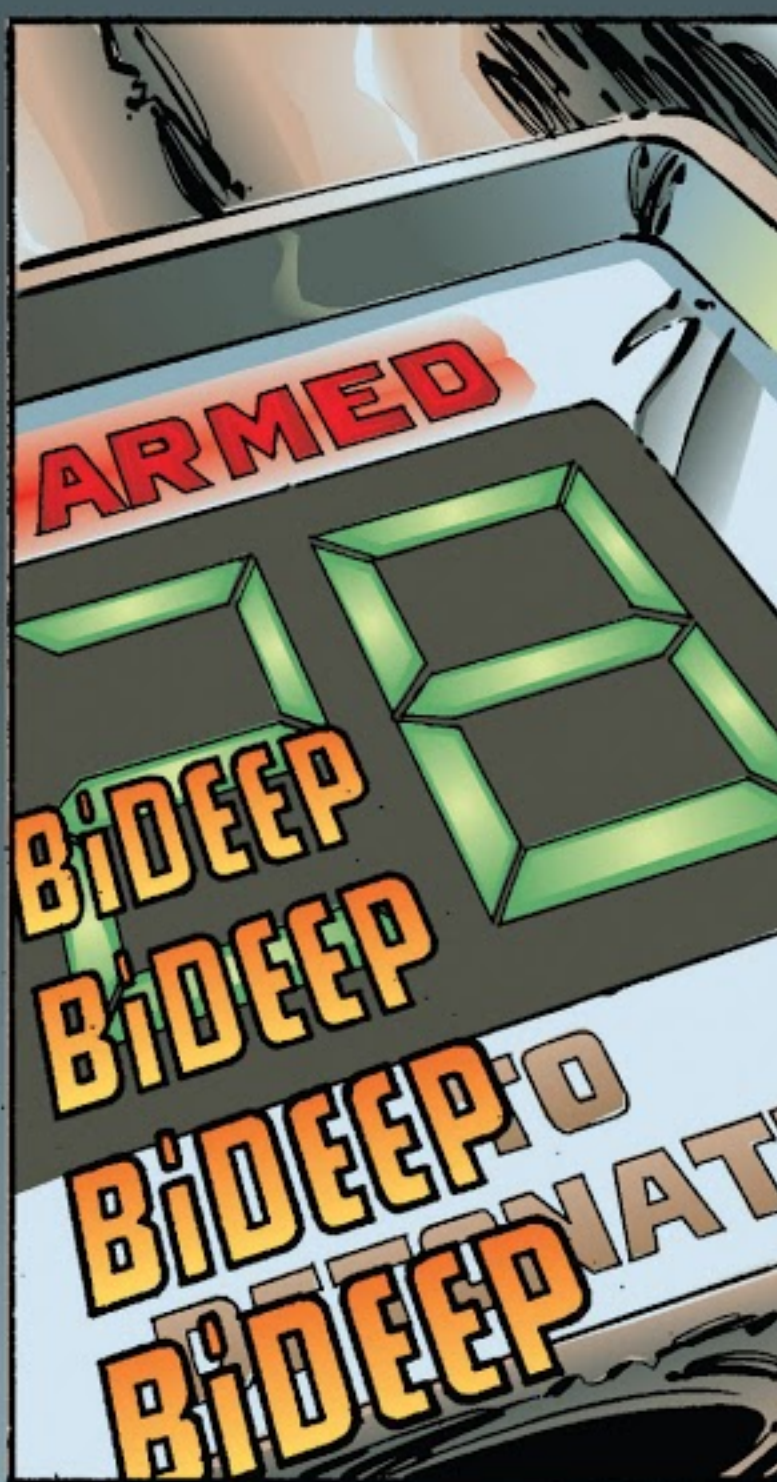
THE EXITS
ARE FEW
AND FAR
BETWEEN.
CHAOS
ENSUES.



FOOLS, IT
WOULD HAVE
BEEN SO
SIMPLE.

YOU IDIOTS!
ENOUGH!!
I HAVE
STARTED THE
TIMER!

LEGGO,
IGOR!



15

I'VE DONE
MY BIT.
THAT'S MY
CUE TO
CHECK OUT
OF HERE.

Aiiiiii!

Skoip!

THOSE SCHLUCKS
HAVE SHUT ME OUT!
IT'S TIME I PAID
THEM A PIECE OF
MY MIND.

CONCENTRATE...

...JUST
ANOTHER
TRAP...

...GOT MY
PATHWAY...

...VISUALIZE...

ARMED

15

THIS IS OUR
MOMENT! TO THINK
WE FEARED HOUDINI'S
REVOLUTIONARY
TALK. I SALUTE
YOU, %19.

I AM
GOOD...

01



FOCUS!!!

HURTS!

TRANSMIT
THE
BLAST...

...CHANNEL...

...THE
BLAST...

REALITY SHATTERS
LIKE CANDIED GLASS.
THE PART OF OUR
UNIVERSE CONTAINING
THE BOMB IS TRAPPED
BY THE SORCERER, AND
SHUNTED INTO
ANOTHER PLACE.

THE INSTANT
OF THE
ATOM'S SPLIT--
THE TIME
WHEN FIERCE
ENERGIES ARE
RELEASED--
NEVER EVEN
HAPPENS
ON OUR
WORLD.

SPAWN
CARRIES ON,
UNAWARE
OF THE
PACKAGED
MOMENT
BEYOND HIM,
VENTING HIS
RAGE ON
TERRY'S
ATTACKER.

AS NATURE
ABHORS A
VACUUM, SO TOO
DOES REALITY,
ONLY MORE SO.
THE STAGE AND
OTHER PARTS OF
OUR WORLD ARE
RENT VIOLENTLY
FROM THIS
PLANE, FOLLOWING
IN THE WAKE OF
THE TRANS-
PORTED BLAST.

MAGICIANS' CLUB
STORAGE

COMPRESSED INTO A BEAM OF POWER, THE REALITY
ENVELOPE IS SHOVED THROUGH THE MAIL SLOT OF
AN UNSUSPECTING ADDRESSEE. BY REFLEX,
HOUDINI USES THE MEMORY OF HIS TRUNK AS A
FOCUS-- AND SENDS THE TIGHT PARTICULATE
STREAM WHERE IT WILL DO THE MOST GOOD.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY'S LECTURE HALL IS BUZZING WITH AMAZED SCIENTISTS. THERE WAS LESS THAN A SECOND OF LIGHT-- BUT THAT WAS ENOUGH TO INSPIRE IDLE SPECULATION FOR YEARS TO COME.



FRIED.
DAMN. I HAD SO MUCH TO LEARN FROM YOU HOUDINI-- IF YOU REALLY WERE HOUDINI.

A FLASH...

AND THEN...

OR SOMETHING...

IT VANISHED...

DID YOU HEAR SOMETHING?

Eh-- IT WAS JUST THE ICE MACHINE DOWN THE HALL.

H. GEIGER
1882-1945

MOMENTS AGO, THESE GEIGER COUNTERS WERE SET OFF THE SCALE BY RADIATION FROM KOLOKHOV'S BOMB.

SO THOROUGH WAS HOUDINI'S MAGIC THAT, FOR A MOMENT, EVEN NORMAL BACKGROUND LEVELS WERE FLAT.



... APPEARS TO BE AN ATTEMPTED NUCLEAR TERRORIST ACTION AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY. WHAT YOU ARE SEEING IS AMATEUR VIDEO, SHOWING WHAT WE BELIEVE TO BE TWO OF THE TERRORISTS. POLICE WILL SAY ONLY THAT ONE IS AN AMERICAN, THE OTHER A UKRAINIAN NATIONAL, AND THAT THERE WAS SOME SORT OF BOMB THREAT.



WITNESSES CLAIM THAT THOUGH IT SEEMED THERE WAS AN EXPLOSION, THE EVIDENCE IS IN DISPUTE. HOWEVER, THE PRESENCE OF AN ARMED ATOMIC BOMB HAS BEEN CORROBORATED BY ANY NUMBER OF EXPERT WITNESSES.

FIRE CREWS ARE LOOKING FOR ANY POSSIBLE CONNECTION BETWEEN THESE REPORTS AND A BLACKENED PART OF THE HALL WHERE THE STAGE HAD BEEN.



THE ALLEGED THREAT WAS APPARENTLY AVERTED BY A SUSPECTED YOUNGBLOOD, THOUGHT TO HAVE BEEN "FRIED TO A CRISP" BY SOME UNKNOWN FORCE AT THE SCENE.

THE GOVERNMENT HAS DENIED BOTH THE REPORT OF THE NUCLEAR THREAT AND SUPPOSED EXPLOSION, AND OF ANY YOUNGBLOOD ACTIVITY IN NEW YORK CITY AT THAT TIME. COULD THIS HAVE BEEN A ROGUE 'BLOOD, CONNECTED TO SOME PREVIOUSLY UNKNOWN ORGANIZATION?



CERTAINLY SOMEONE OR SOMETHING WAS RECORDED LEAVING THE SCENE. HERE WITH AN ANALYSIS...

ELSEWHERE
ON THE
COLUMBIA
CAMPUS...

SEEMS
HOUDINI LEFT
THE CAR INVISIBLE.
THAT MAKES IT
UP TO ME TO
FIND IT.

JUST
CONCENTRATE...
USE THE COSTUME
TO REARRANGE THE
PHOTONS... MAKE
THE CAR
REAPPEAR...



PERFECT. I GUESS I
MIGHT BETTER AT MAGIC
THAN I THOUGHT.

SORRY
ABOUT THE
MYSTERY HERE,
TERRY, BUT I
CAN'T HAVE YOU
KNOW ABOUT
ME JUST YET.

DAMMIT!
HOUDINI HAD
THE KEYS!

FINE.
I'LL JUST
MANIFEST
THEM.

EASY!

BY CREATING THE KEY,
SPAWN PASSED HOUDINI'S
TEST.

WHAT
THE--

fssing

POOT

THE CAR'S
PURPOSE THUS
FULFILLED, IT
DEFAULTS
BACK TO THE
OVERLAP.



BACK IN THE BOWERY, LIFE HAS RETURNED TO NORMAL IN THE HOURS AFTER THE LECTURE...

THE POLICE, LEFT WITH NO EVIDENCE OF A CRIME, HAVE DROPPED ALL CHARGES AGAINST PORSCHE MacNEIL.

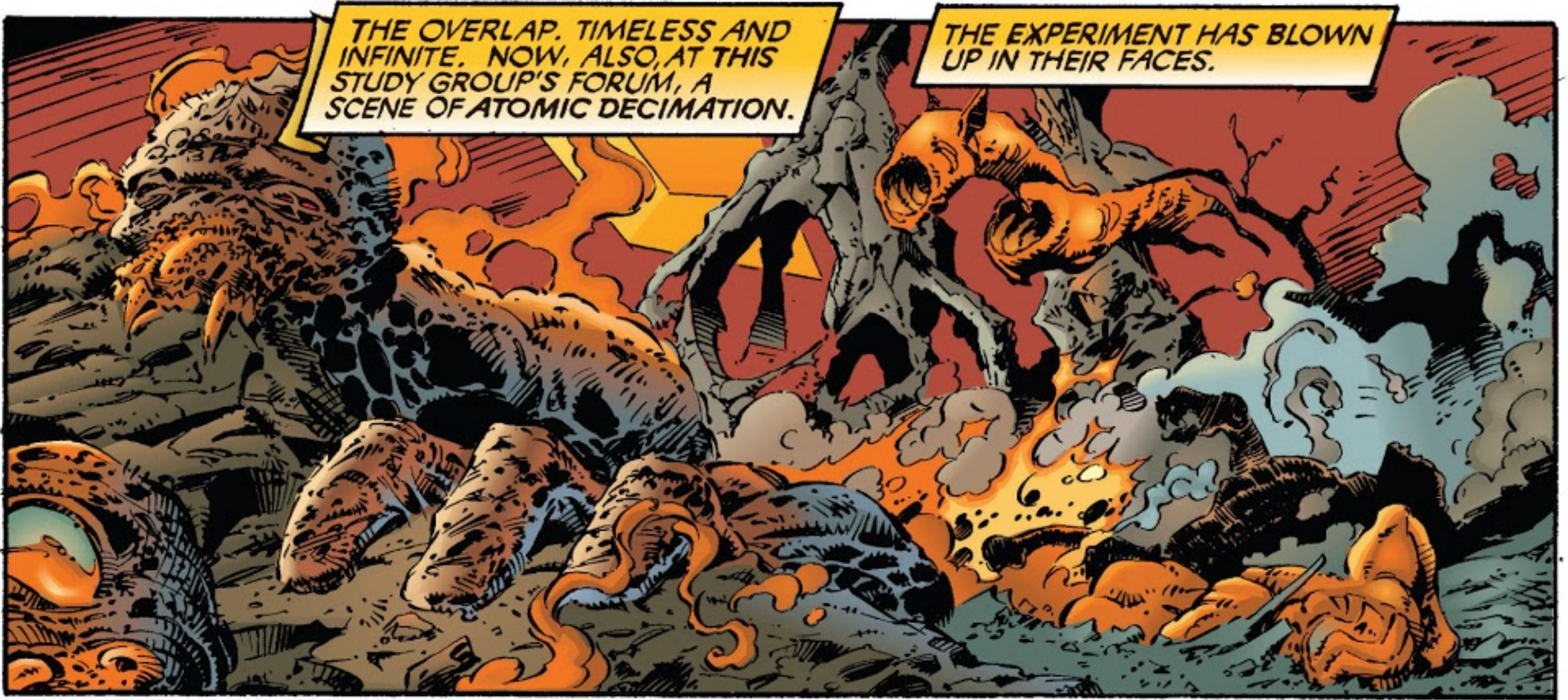


THOUGH LOUD, THE BLAST WAS HARMLESS. CONFETTI FALLS, A PAPER RAIN CARRYING A NOTE WITH IT.



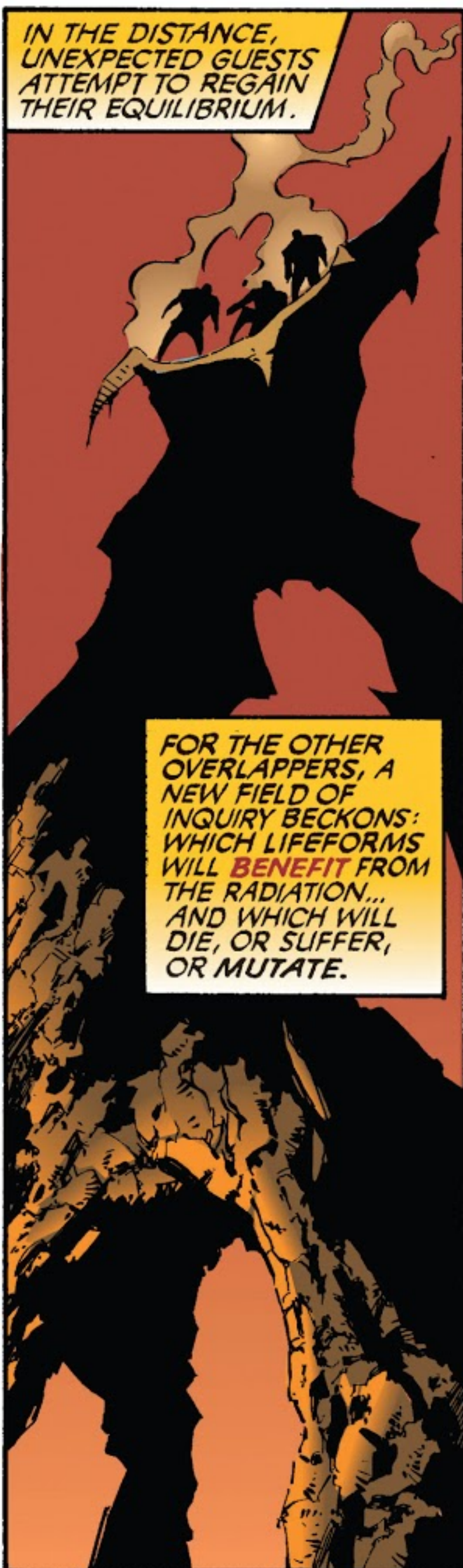
DON'T EVER MESS WITH ME OR MY ALLEY AGAIN, OR THE NEXT ONE TAKES OUT YOU AND THE WHOLE BUILDING WITH IT.

— SPAWN



THE OVERLAP. TIMELESS AND INFINITE. NOW, ALSO, AT THIS STUDY GROUP'S FORUM, A SCENE OF ATOMIC DECIMATION.

THE EXPERIMENT HAS BLOWN UP IN THEIR FACES.



IN THE DISTANCE, UNEXPECTED GUESTS ATTEMPT TO REGAIN THEIR EQUILIBRIUM.

FOR THE OTHER OVERLAPERS, A NEW FIELD OF INQUIRY BECKONS: WHICH LIFEFORMS WILL **BENEFIT** FROM THE RADIATION... AND WHICH WILL DIE, OR SUFFER, OR MUTATE.



FOR SOME, THE SUFFERING IS OBVIOUS.

GREGOR... HAVE WE DIED?

WHERE ARE WE? HOW LONG MUST WE STAY HERE?

IS THIS THE AFTERLIFE?

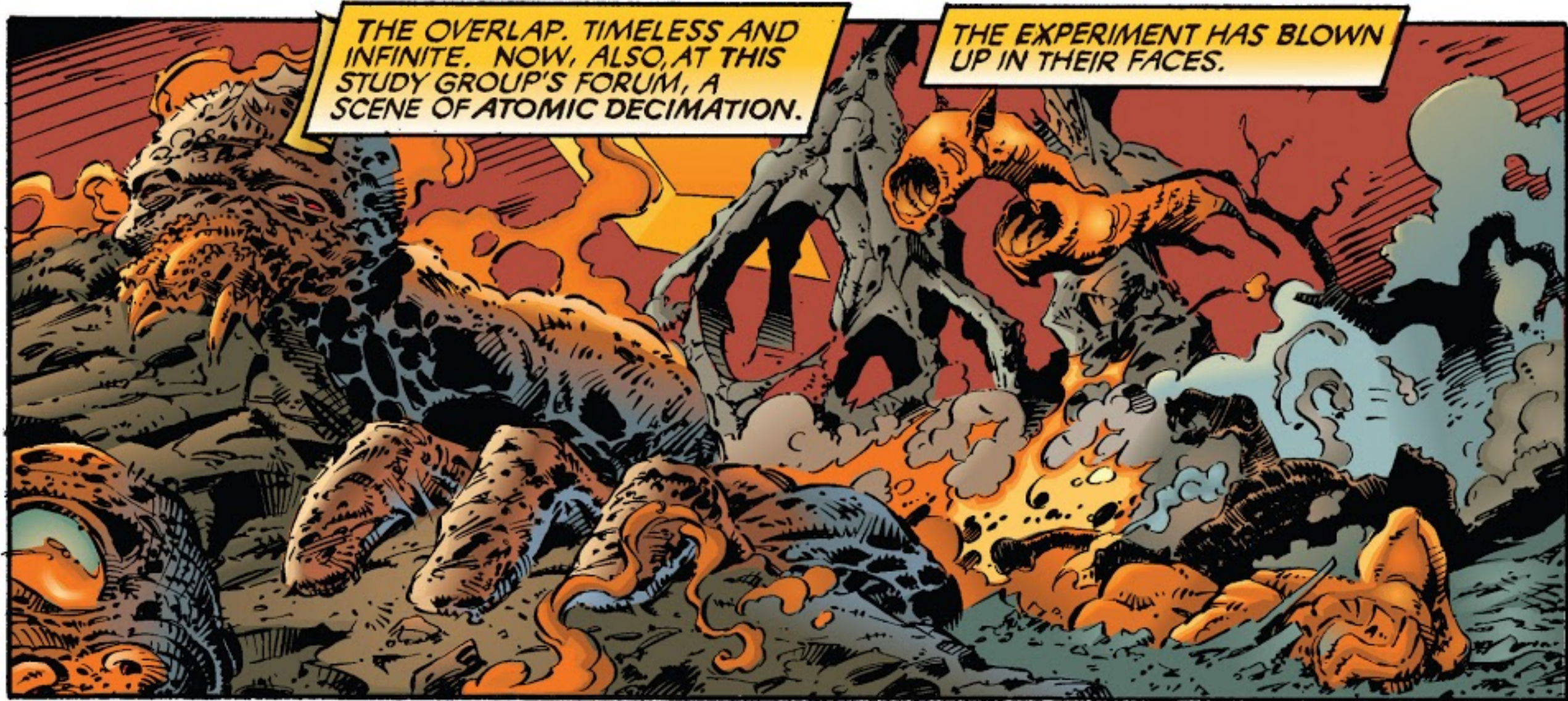


NOT AT ALL, EARTHIAN SCUM! NOW THAT YOUR ENERGY HAS BEEN DAMPENED, YOU HAVE MUCH TO ANSWER FOR, AND EVEN MORE TO CLEAN!

IT WILL BE INTERESTING TO SEE HOW YOUR KIND FARE AGAINST RADIATION BURNS, LITTLE HUMANS. WE HAVE **FOREVER** TO LEARN!

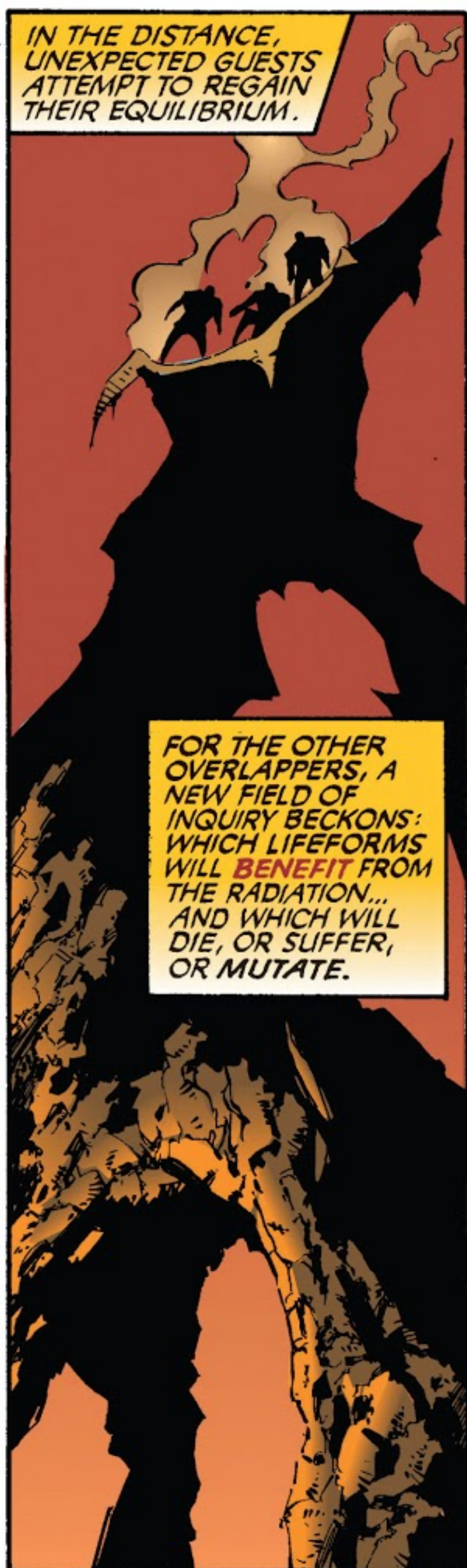
raaht--
CLEAN!
CLEAN!

FOREVER!
--raahtt--
FOREVER!



THE OVERLAP. TIMELESS AND INFINITE. NOW, ALSO, AT THIS STUDY GROUP'S FORUM, A SCENE OF ATOMIC DECIMATION.

THE EXPERIMENT HAS BLOWN UP IN THEIR FACES.



IN THE DISTANCE, UNEXPECTED GUESTS ATTEMPT TO REGAIN THEIR EQUILIBRIUM.

FOR THE OTHER OVERLAPERS, A NEW FIELD OF INQUIRY BECKONS: WHICH LIFEFORMS WILL **BENEFIT** FROM THE RADIATION... AND WHICH WILL DIE, OR SUFFER, OR MUTATE.



FOR SOME, THE SUFFERING IS OBVIOUS.

GREGOR... HAVE WE DIED?

WHERE ARE WE? HOW LONG MUST WE STAY HERE?

IS THIS THE AFTERLIFE?



NOT AT ALL, EARTHIAN SCUM! NOW THAT YOUR ENERGY HAS BEEN DAMPENED, YOU HAVE MUCH TO ANSWER FOR, AND EVEN MORE TO CLEAN!

IT WILL BE INTERESTING TO SEE HOW YOUR KIND FARE AGAINST RADIATION BURNS, LITTLE HUMANS. WE HAVE **FOREVER** TO LEARN!

raaht--
CLEAN!
CLEAN!

FOREVER!
--raahtt--
FOREVER!

AGAIN, 1916,
ON A STAGE IN
LOS ANGELES...



HE HASN'T
GOT OUT YET!
HARRY SAID
RAISE IT
AFTER FIVE
MINUTES!

THE HUSHED
AUDIENCE IS
TERRIFIED.
NO NORMAL
HUMAN BEING
COULD HAVE
SURVIVED THIS
LONG-- FIVE
MINUTES!--
WITHOUT AIR.



THE
TRUNK IS
LOWERED
TO THE
STAGE.

INTENSITY BUILDS.
THE GENTEEL CROWD
WAITS BREATHLESSLY.
WILL THEY SEE DEATH
FIRSTHAND?



ONCE MORE,
HARRY HOUDINI
HAS MYSTIFIED
THEM.

THANK
YOU!
YOU'RE
TOO
KIND!

A COUPLE
MORE MANACLES
AND I WOULDN'T'VE
HAD THE SECONDS
TO SLIP AWAY
AND BACK!

Hm... PERHAPS
I CAN WORK THAT
"DIVERTED EXPLO-
SION" GIMMICK
INTO MY SHOW.

OF COURSE,
% ^ 2 MIGHT
HAVE SOME-
THING TO SAY
AGAINST
THAT.

LUCKY
FOR HIM,
I'LL HAVE
TO SAVE
THAT
ENCORE FOR
ANOTHER
DAY.

Ahhh...
MY PUBLIC.
I RETURN
FOR YOU YET
AGAIN!

WHERE'S
HIS
CAPE?



The END



image

21
JUN

DIGITAL
EDITION

SPAWN[®]



McFARLANE
94

HEY!

WATCH
IT, YOU
BUTCHER!

SETTLE
DOWN,
YOU BIG
BABY.

CRIPES.

YOU'D
THINK I WAS
MURDERIN'
YA OR
SOMETHING.

NOW
STOP
MOVING.

OW!

IN A CITY OF A
MILLION VOICES,
WE FOCUS OUR
ATTENTION UPON
TWO IN PARTICULAR.

ONE IS THE
CURRENT RULER
OF NEW YORK'S
HIDDEN BACK
STREETS-- A
FIGURE WHOSE
LIFE HAS GROWN
AS TWISTED AS
THE MATTED HAIR
OF THE STRAY
DOGS WHICH
WANDER THOSE
SAME ALLEYS.

THE **OTHER**
BELONGS TO
ONE OF THE
MANY HOME-
LESS UNDER
THIS NEW
SENTINEL'S
WATCHFUL
EYE...

...ONE WHOSE
GRATITUDE IS
NEARLY BEYOND
WORDS.

JEE-ZU!
WHAT A
WIMP!

LISTEN,
AL. I'M
DOING THE
BEST I
CAN.

SO A
LITTLE
RESPECT AND
THANKFULNESS
MIGHT NOT
KILL YA--
YOU THINK?

LOOK,
I'M NOT
COMPLAINING
OR ANY-
THING...

...BUT
WHEN YOU
SAID YOU'D
HAD SOME
MEDICAL
EXPERIENCE, I
ASSUMED YOU
MEANT MORE
THAN JUST THE
BARBARIC,
STONE-AGE
KIND.

EVERY-
ONE'S A
FRIGGIN' CRITIC.

CONSIDER
YOURSELF
LUCKY I DIDN'T
DECIDE TO
TIE ONE ON
BEFORE I
STARTED.

HA HA

THEN I'D
REALLY BE
SHAKY.

GET IT?!

TIE ONE ON?

TIE?

HA HA HAAA

I CAN
HARDLY
CONTAIN
MYSELF.

THERE!
THAT JUST
ABOUT DOES
IT. BY THE WAY,
I FORGOT TO
ASK-- HOW'D
YOU GET THAT
NASTY GASH
ANYWAY?



RAN INTO
SOME BOZO
IN BLACK.*

*SEE ISSUES 19 AND 20,
NOT OUT YET! - Tom.



MY LIFE.

Ok. THAT.

NOTHING GOOD IS HAPPENING. EVERY TIME I MAKE A MOVE, THERE'RE SOME CREEPS OUT THERE TRYING TO MAKE A NAME FOR THEMSELVES.

I USED TO KNOW WHAT **GOOD** AND **BAD** MEANT. NOW **EVERYTHING'S** SCREWED UP. HEAVEN. HELL. DEMONS. MAGIC. YOU NAME IT. THEY'RE **ALL** AFTER ME ON SOME LEVEL.

HOW'S THAT MAKE YOU FEEL?

DRAINED.

I'M MENTALLY TIRED OF IT ALL. THIS ISN'T WHAT I WANTED. NONE OF THIS.

I JUST WANTED MY WIFE. JUST MY WIFE. NOTHING ELSE. DOES THAT MAKE ANY SENSE, BOBBY?

PERFECT.

LOOK, AL, I KNOW I'M NOT THE BEST LOOKER IN TOWN AND DON'T HAVE MUCH OF A LIFE, BUT I USED TO BE MARRIED, TOO. SAINT OF A WOMAN. PUT UP WITH ME FOR OVER TWENTY YEARS. ALWAYS THERE FOR ME.

MET HER AT A CHURCH FUNCTION IN '57. PRETTIEST GAL BY FAR. Y'KNOW, PEOPLE TAKE THOSE KINDS OF THINGS FOR GRANTED. I KNOW I DID. TWENTY-THREE YEARS OF HAPPINESS... THEN

BOOM.
IT'S OVER.

CANCER OF THE BRAIN. I DON'T RECOMMEND IT.

IT ATE AWAY AT THAT WOMAN LIKE **ACID**. BY THE TIME THE END CAME SHE DIDN'T KNOW **WHO** I WAS.

COULDN'T EAT. CRAP. MOVE. NOTHING. IN SPITE OF IT ALL, THOUGH, SHE DIDN'T PUT UP A FUSS. DIDN'T WANT TO **BOTHER** ANYONE.

ESPECIALLY NOT **ME**.

THEN THE DOCTORS--WITH ALL THEIR SO-CALLED POWERS--TOLD ME THEY COULDN'T HELP.

THIS WOMAN WHO WAS A SAINT, THEY COULDN'T EASE HER SUFFERING.

THEN THESE BUGGERS MADE ME SIGN PAPERS TO PULL THE PLUG.

BLAM. END OF GAME.

YOU CAN SEE HOW WELL I'VE HANDLED IT SINCE. WASN'T MAN ENOUGH TO PICK UP THE PIECES AND CARRY ON. SO I WALLOWED IN SELF-PITY 'TIL I LOST **EVERYTHING**.

I'M SORRY, BOBBY.

I DON'T WANT YOUR PITY. THAT'S NOT THE **POINT**. I JUST DON'T WANT YOU TURNING OUT TO BE LIKE ME OR THE OTHER GUYS.

WE LOOK UP TO YOU.



GAWD!

LISTEN TO ME
BLUBBERING LIKE
A TWO-YEAR-OLD.

WHAT I'M
TRYING
TO
SAY IS THAT
YOU'RE
OKAY!

YOU NEED TO
FIND YOUR ANSWERS.
DO IT. JUST DON'T
LOSE SIGHT OF WHAT
YOU ALREADY
HAVE.

WHICH
IS?

US.

SINCE YOU
SHOWED UP, THINGS
HAVE BEEN STRANGE
AROUND HERE. WELL,
MAYBE IT'S YOU, MAYBE
NOT. WHO CARES. WHAT
I **DO** KNOW IS THAT THE
BOYS AND I **LIKE**
HAVING YOU
AROUND.

MAKES US
FEEL A BIT **COCKY**,
IF YOU KNOW
WHAT I MEAN.



IF YOU CAN'T PICK UP THE PIECES, THEN YOU AIN'T ANY BETTER THAN **US**.

WE ALWAYS THOUGHT YOU WERE MORE THAN THAT.

HELL!

FOR OUR SAFETY, WE **NEED** YOU TO BE MORE THAN THAT.

THANKS, BOB.

THANKS A WHOLE LOT.

IT'S TIME I STARTED TAKING CONTROL OF THIS LIFE.

YOU TELL THE GUYS NOT TO WORRY. EVERYTHING WILL BE FINE.



SPAWN THEN DISAPPEARS INTO THE BLACK OCEAN OF SHADOWS, LEAVING BEHIND ONE OF HIS MANY ADMIRERS.

IS HE COOL? OR WHAT?

WHAT?!



UNFORTUNATELY, IT'S TRUE, MR. WYNN.

THESE NEW REPORTS CAME IN DURING YOUR RECENT DISAPPEARANCE. WE JUST NOW RECEIVED THE FINISHED BRIEF. AFTER EXTENSIVE CROSS-CHECKING, WE'VE HAD TO CONCLUDE THAT AGENT FITZGERALD SHOULD BE NO LONGER CONSIDERED A MAJOR SUSPECT BEHIND THE RECENT SECURITY BREACHES.

WE'RE SORRY, SIR.



A COVERT DIRECTOR OF THE C.I.A., **JASON WYNN** RUNS HIS OFFICE WITH NEAR IMPUNITY...

...HIS AMBITIONS STEAM-ROLLING OVER ANY INNOCENTS IN HIS WAY.

PRESENTLY, THE LOCAL POLICE ARE MONITORING HIM, AND THERE ARE TEN F.B.I. AGENTS ON THE CASE AS WELL. SHOULDN'T WE CALL IT OFF, POSSIBLY TARGET ANOTHER OF OUR SUSPECTS?

SIR?

TRAPPED. IT'S NOT A POSITION **JASON WYNN** HAS FOUND HIMSELF IN VERY OFTEN. HIS TWO-DAY DISAPPEARANCE* HAS FURTHER COMPLICATED THE SITUATION. THE PRESIDENT WASN'T SATISFIED WITH WYNN'S EXPLANATION. TO PULL MEN FROM AN OPERATION WOULD BE A CLEAR ADMISSION OF ERROR...

...AND WEAKNESS.

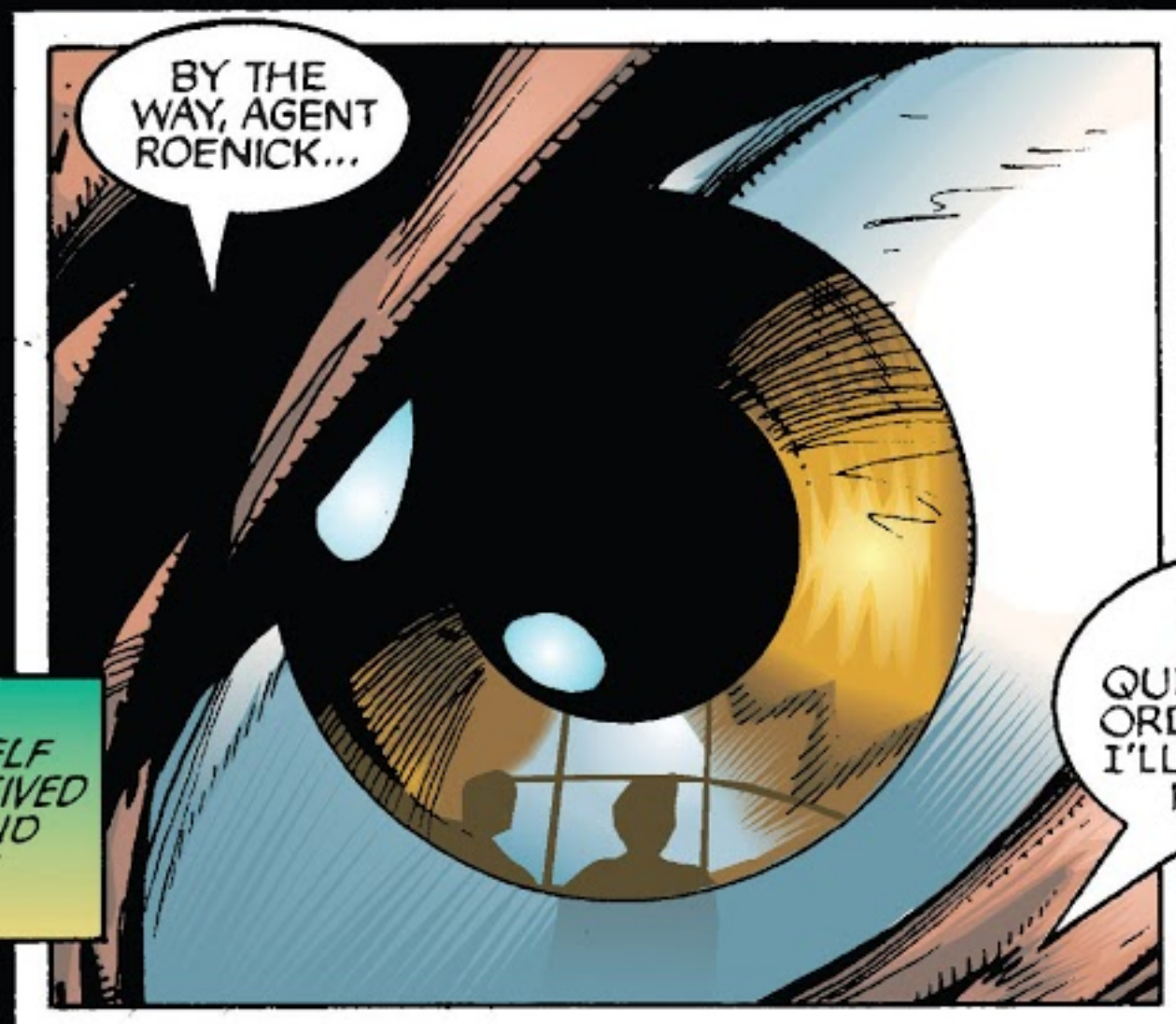
CONTINUE SURVEILLANCE AS USUAL.

FITZGERALD REMAINS OUR PRIME TARGET.

*ISSUES 16 TO 18 -- Tom



ASSIGN SOME MEN TO COVER HIS WIFE. **MS. BLAKE** IS NOT TO BE TRUSTED EITHER.



BY THE WAY, AGENT ROENICK...

IF YOU **EVER** QUESTION MY ORDERS AGAIN, I'LL HAVE YOU KILLED.

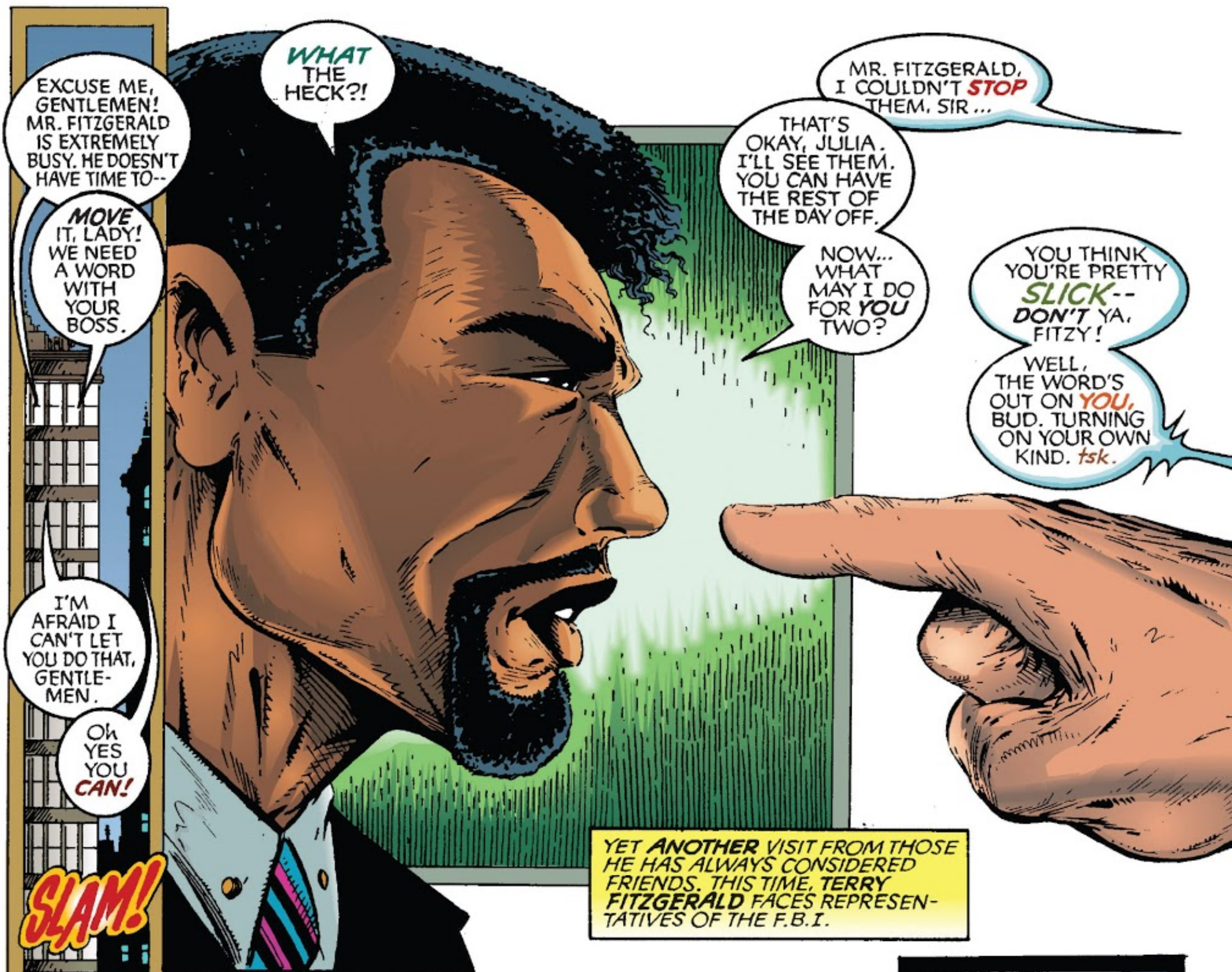
THEN WAIT FOR FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS.

BUT, SIR-- THE REPORT! ARE YOU SURE THAT...

HAVE IT DESTROYED.

NOW.

THUS, WYNN PROTECTS HIMSELF FROM ANY PERCEIVED WRONGDOING AND REINFORCES HIS AUTHORITY.



EXCUSE ME, GENTLEMEN! MR. FITZGERALD IS EXTREMELY BUSY. HE DOESN'T HAVE TIME TO--

MOVE IT, LADY! WE NEED A WORD WITH YOUR BOSS.

I'M AFRAID I CAN'T LET YOU DO THAT, GENTLEMEN.

Oh YES YOU CAN!

WHAT THE HECK?!

MR. FITZGERALD, I COULDN'T STOP THEM, SIR ...

THAT'S OKAY, JULIA. I'LL SEE THEM. YOU CAN HAVE THE REST OF THE DAY OFF.

NOW... WHAT MAY I DO FOR YOU TWO?

YOU THINK YOU'RE PRETTY SLICK-- DON'T YA, FITZY!

WELL, THE WORD'S OUT ON YOU, BUD. TURNING ON YOUR OWN KIND. *tsk.*

YET ANOTHER VISIT FROM THOSE HE HAS ALWAYS CONSIDERED FRIENDS. THIS TIME, TERRY FITZGERALD FACES REPRESENTATIVES OF THE F.B.I.

SLAM!



GUYS LIKE YOU MAKE OUR JOB TWICE AS HARD. WE GOT ENOUGH PROBLEMS WITH THE CIVILIANS.

YEAH. AND WE DON'T LIKE PROBLEMS WITH ONE OF OUR OWN.

EXACTLY.

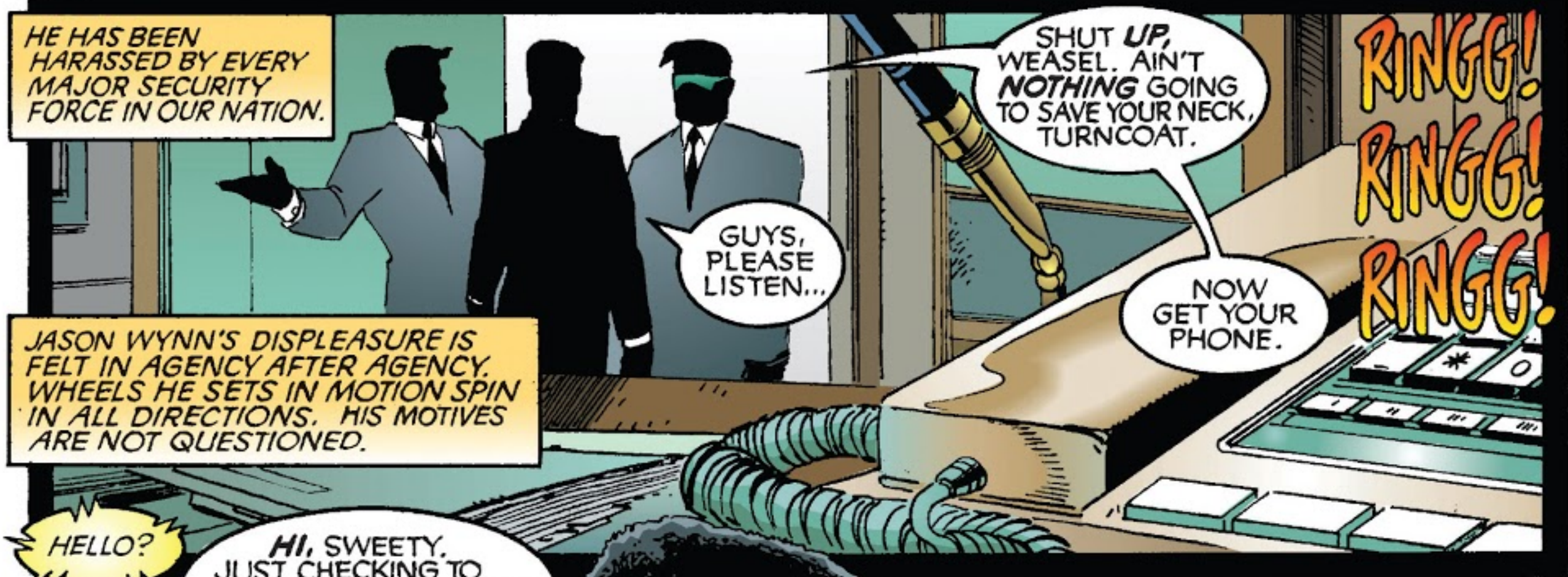
TECHNICALLY, YOU'RE CLEAN... BUT I PROMISE YOU, THAT WON'T LAST.

YOU SEE, YOU'VE ATTRACTED THE PERSONAL INTEREST OF ME AND THE BOYS. SOMETHING'S GOING TO TURN UP. AND IF IT DOESN'T...

... I BET WE FIND SOMETHING ODD ANYWAY.

YOU'RE GOING DOWN, FITZGERALD.

TERRY CAN ONLY STAND IN SILENCE AS THE THREATS AND INNUENDO SLICE EVER DEEPER. HIS MIND RACES. HE AFFECTS CALM.



HE HAS BEEN HARASSED BY EVERY MAJOR SECURITY FORCE IN OUR NATION.

JASON WYNN'S DISPLEASURE IS FELT IN AGENCY AFTER AGENCY. WHEELS HE SETS IN MOTION SPIN IN ALL DIRECTIONS. HIS MOTIVES ARE NOT QUESTIONED.

SHUT UP, WEASEL. AIN'T NOTHING GOING TO SAVE YOUR NECK, TURNCOAT.

GUYS, PLEASE LISTEN...

NOW GET YOUR PHONE.

RINGG!
RINGG!
RINGG!



HELLO?

HI, SWEETY. JUST CHECKING TO MAKE SURE YOU DIDN'T FORGET OUR DINNER DATE TONIGHT.

Um... uh-- NO, WANDA, I DIDN'T.

GREAT. I HAVE MARYANNE COMING OVER TO BABYSIT **CYAN**. YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN HER AT THE PARK TODAY. **STILL** WON'T GO DOWN THE SLIDE BY HERSELF. MADE ALL THE KIDS WAIT IN LINE! SHE FINALLY MADE ME GO UP AND **GET** HER.

WHAT A KID!

ANYWAYS, ARE YOU GOING TO BE LEAVING THE OFFICE SOON?



Um-- SURE.

I JUST FINISHED A MEETING.

IMPORTANT?

NOTHING SPECIAL.

BETTER WATCH YOUR **BACK**, FITZY, 'CAUSE THERE AIN'T NO ONE WATCHIN' OUT FOR IT NOW.

WE'LL **BE** IN TOUCH.

MAYBE
THIS'LL
JOG YOUR
MEMORY!!

EASY
NOW,
SIR.

NOW, LET'S
TRY THIS
AGAIN.

UMP
HFF

POLICE
BRUTALITY...

I GOT--
MY--
Koff
RIGHTS.

I'LL
SUE...

YEAH,
YEAH. I'LL
WRITE UP A
REPORT...

...MAKE
SURE I GET
EVERYTHING
DOWN FOR YOUR
LAWYER.

LIKE THAT
POUND AND A HALF
OF **CRACK** IN YOUR
CAR. NOT TO MENTION
THE ILLEGAL
FIREARMS.

OF COURSE,
I CAN SEE HOW
AN UPSTANDING
CITIZEN LIKE YOUR-
SELF WILL BE TAKEN
AT **HIS** WORD IN
THIS INCIDENT.

WHAT D'YA
THINK,
TWITCH?

I'M
LOOKING
FOR A
NEW JOB
TOMORROW,
SIR.

SWAK

GOD, I LOVE HIS SARCASTISM.

SUCK ME, FAT BOY! I AIN'T GIVING YOU NOTHING!

FOR DETECTIVES **SAM BURKE** AND "**TWITCH**" **WILLIAMS**, N.Y.P.D., AN OCCASIONAL SCOURING OF THE 'SKIN' DISTRICT IS JUST ONE OF THE ROUTINES. NOT MUCH THAT'S USEFUL GIVES ITSELF UP WILLINGLY. THIS TIME AROUND, THOUGH, THEY HAVE A VESTED INTEREST IN A CERTAIN **HERO FROM HELL**. HAVING GLIMPSED HIS CAPE NOW A SECOND TIME*, THEY KNOW THE TRAIL IS STILL HOT...

I **KNOW** MY RIGHTS.

...THAT IT'S JUST A MATTER OF FINDING THE RIGHT RAT TO LEAD THEM.

*ISSUES 5 AND 14 -- Tom

WELL, HERE'S THE SET-UP. YOU, MY LITTLE SCUMBAG JIMMY, HAVE **TWO DAYS** TO GET ME THE INFO I WANT.

Oh YES!

LIKE THE RIGHT TO DO BUSINESS WITH THOSE **HIGH SCHOOL KIDS** YOU KEEP SHOVING YOUR DRUGS TO.

I GUESS THAT'S A RIGHT.

WON'T BE GOOD FOR YOUR PROFESSIONAL IMAGE IF YOU SUDDENLY HAVE TO PEDdle YOUR STUFF FROM A **WHEEL-CHAIR**.

DOESN'T LOOK COOL TO THE KIDS.

I SAID I **DON'T KNOW** ANYTHING ABOUT A GUY IN RED.

tsk
tsk.

I **SAID--**

DO I MAKE MYSELF **CLEAR!**

EET!

CRUNCH

IF YOU **DO**, I'LL ONLY CONFISCATE YOUR DRUGS AND MAKE SURE YOU DON'T SET UP SHOP AGAIN.

AND IF YOU **DON'T**...

...THEN I'LL MAKE SURE YOU GET PUT AWAY SO LONG YOU'LL WISH YOU'D BOUGHT STOCK IN THE **VASELINE** COMPANY.

DO I MAKE MYSELF **CLEAR**, MISTER SWEET CHEEKS?

FOR THE NEXT 48 HOURS, JIMMY LINDEN DISPLAYS REMARKABLE INITIATIVE AS HE DIGS FOR ANSWERS.

ELSEWHERE IN THE CITY, AL SIMMONS HUDDLES QUIETLY IN THE DISCARDED WASTE OF THE 'REAL' WORLD-- CAMOUFLAGED BY THE MAKESHIFT BEDDING OF THE HOMELESS.

DURING THESE LONELIEST HOURS, HE WONDERS HOW HE HAS BECOME SO DISTRACTED FROM THE SIMPLE GOAL OF THIS NEW UN-LIFE: TO SET THINGS STRAIGHT WITH HIS WIDOW, WANDA BLAKE.

HE'S NOT SURPRISED THEN AS ANOTHER COMPLICATION CROPS UP.

AL!

HEY AL!!

GET UP, MAN!
WE GOT TROUBLE AGAIN!

WHAT IS IT, JODY?

SOME NAZI-SKINHEAD IS OUT LOOKING FOR YOU. SAYS HE WAS SENT BY THE MAFIA. SAYS HE'S GOING TO KNOCK A FEW HEADS UNTIL YOU SHOW. SAYS YOU'RE A PUSSY!

ANOTHER SNARL IN SIMMONS' TANGLED EXISTENCE. ANOTHER HOTSHOT LOOKING TO MAKE A NAME FOR HIMSELF AT THE HELLSPAWN'S EXPENSE.

WHAT HE'D BEEN SELFISHLY CONSIDERING AS "DISTRACTIONS" HAVE SURFACED AS ACTUAL THREATS. THESE FOLKS ARE FAMILY NOW, UNDER HIS PROTECTION, AND AL SIMMONS IS AT HEART A FAMILY MAN.

ON TOO MANY LEVELS, HIS FEELINGS ABOUT FAMILY AREN'T BEING MADE CLEAR.

IT'S TIME TO EMPHASIZE THAT POINT, LOUDLY AND WITH FEELING.



I DON'T
GIVE A *CRA*P
WHOSE SIDE
YOU THINK
YOU'RE
ON...

I WANT
ME YOUR
MAGIC-
MAN.

WHAT KIND
OF SAVIOR
LIVES ON
THE *STREETS*?
MUST BE SOME
FRIGGIN'
PSYCHO!





YOU TOOK THE WORDS RIGHT OUT OF MY MOUTH.

Koff
Koff

DON'T YOU **SCREW** WITH THESE GUYS.

THEY'LL **HURT** YOU. YOUR FAMILY. YOUR **FRIENDS**. EVEN YOUR FRIGGIN' **PETS**.

SO DO YOURSELF A FAVOR AND GET OUTTA TOWN. IT'LL SAVE **EVERYONE** A LOT OF BLOOD.



SPAWN SAYS NOTHING-- JUST CROUCHES OVER HIM AND **STARES**.

TWENTY SECONDS PASS.

YOU CRAZY **BUGGER!** THEY'LL **KILL YA!**

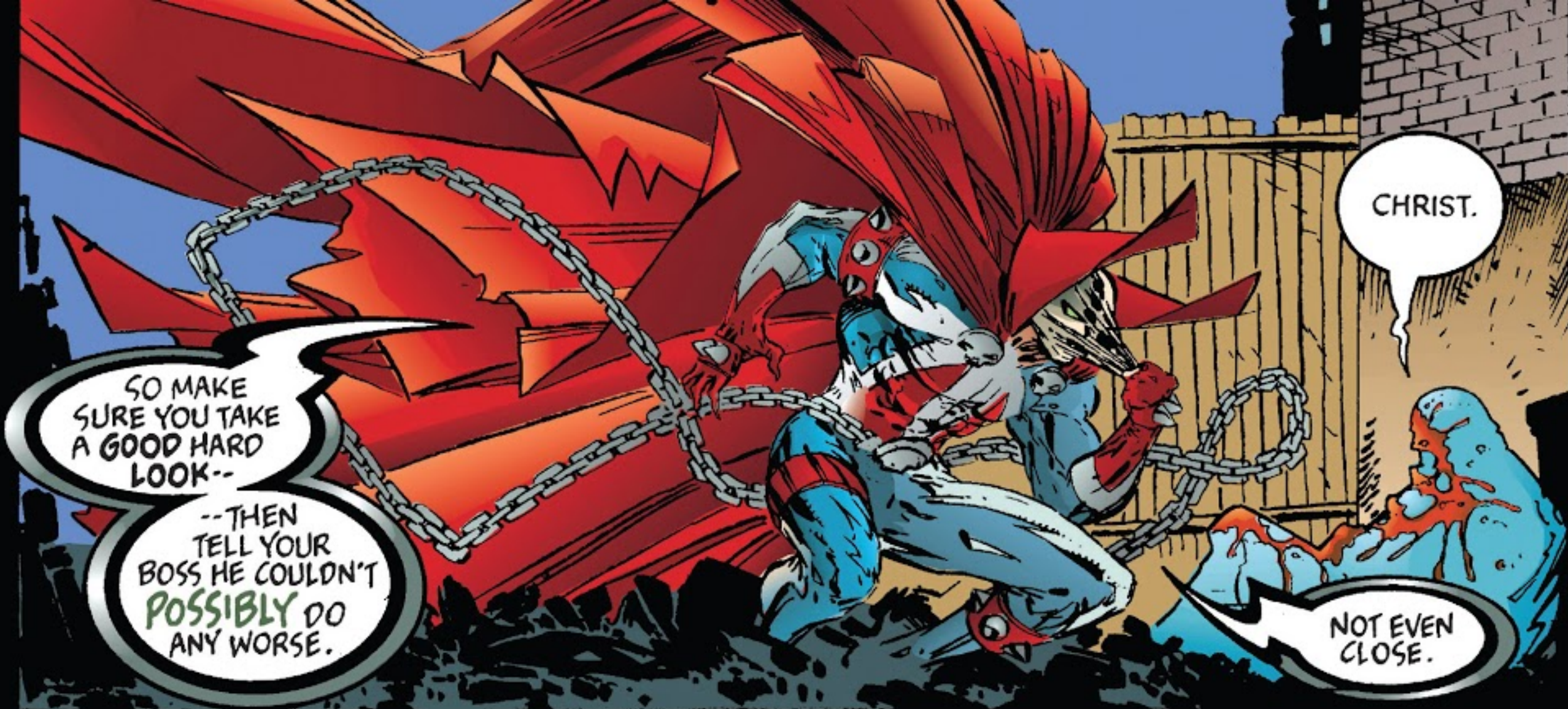
YOU **HEAR?!**



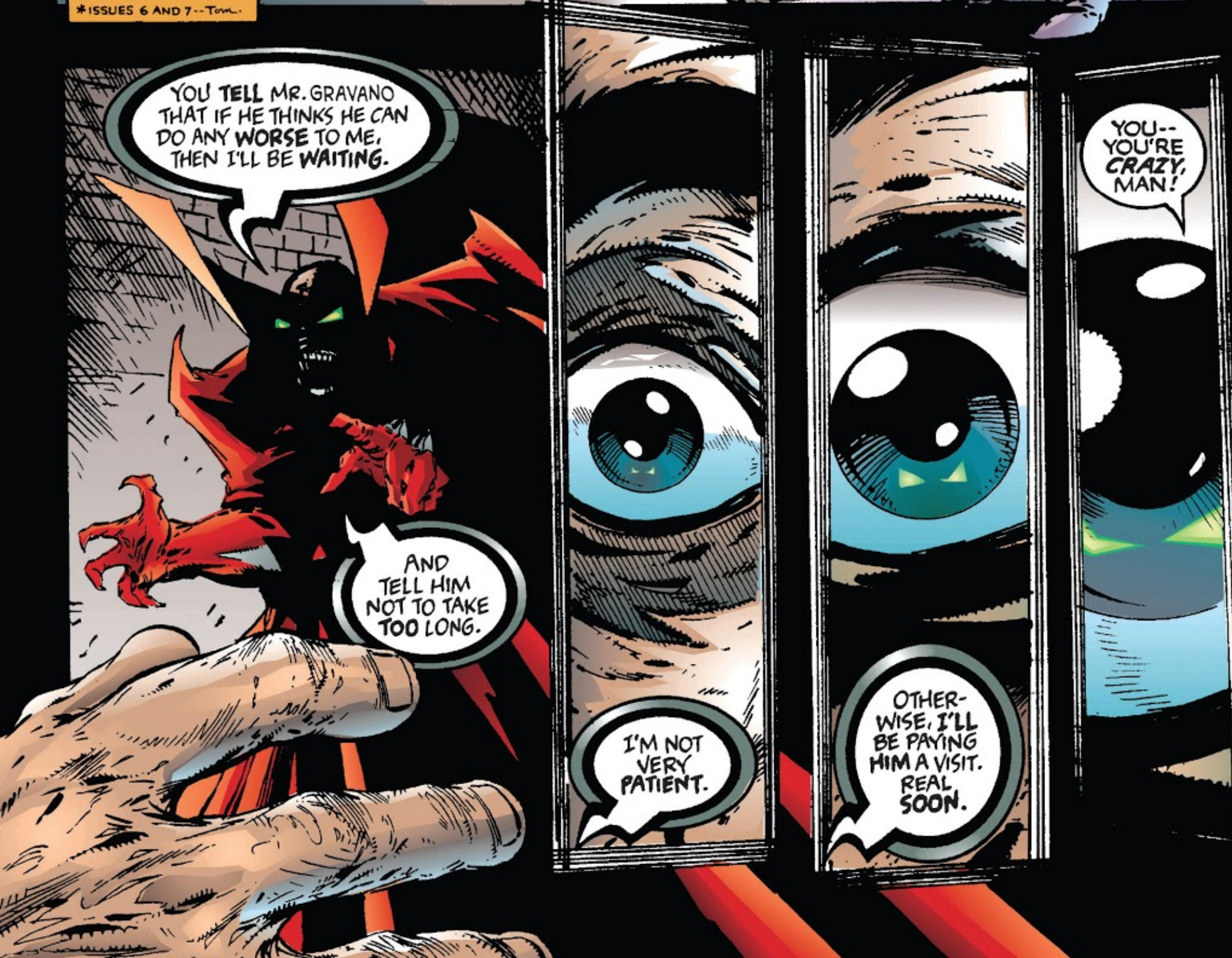
YOU'RE **DEAD MEAT!!**

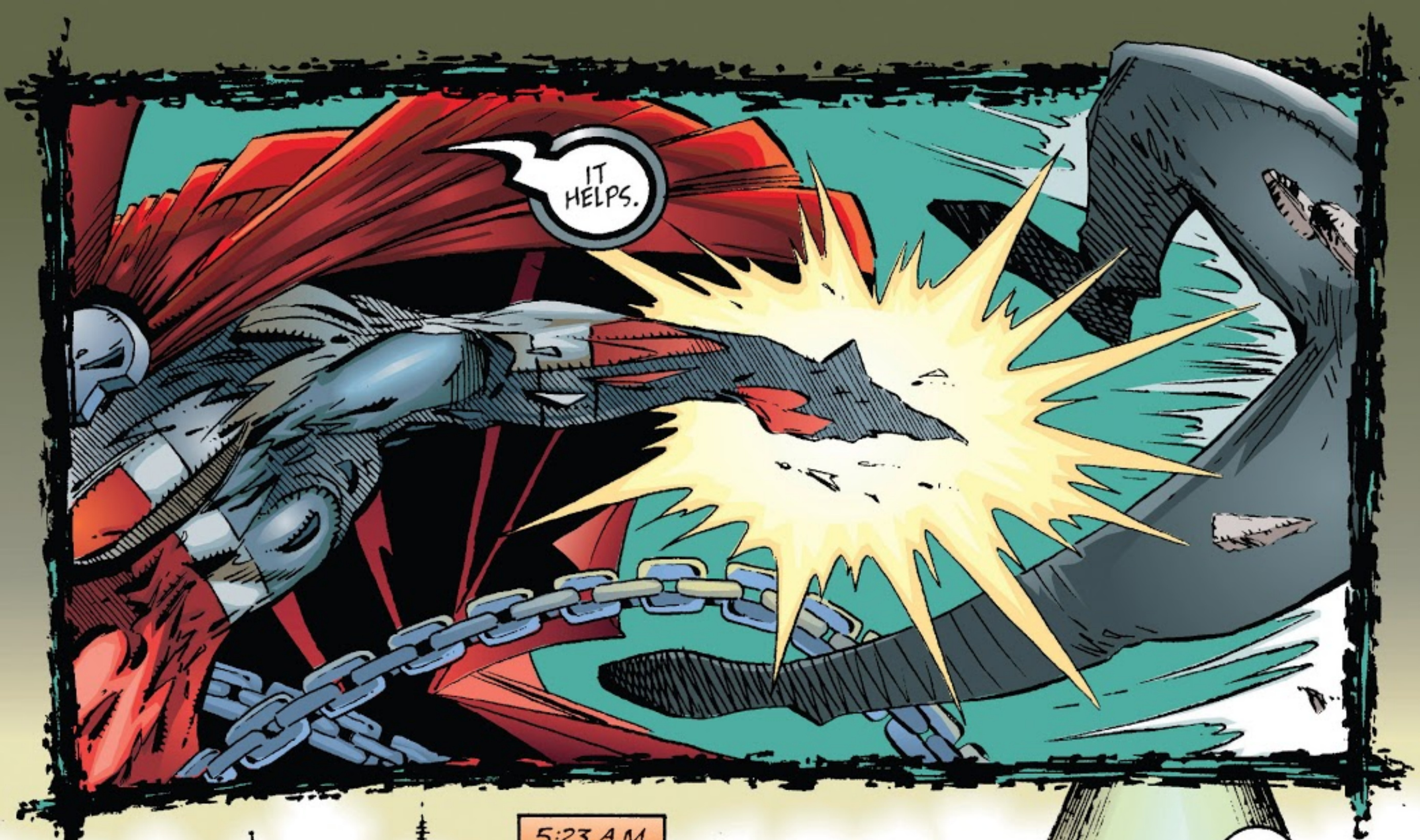
YOU'RE
DAMN
RIGHT
I AM!





*ISSUES 6 AND 7--Tom--





5:23 A.M.

THE SUN'S FIRST LIGHT SKIMS MANHATTAN-- DARTING AMONG OFFICE TOWERS AND OCCASIONALLY TRICKLING TO ALREADY-BUSY STREETS.

IN THE SUITE POSITIONED TO CATCH THE FIRST GLEAM OF THAT LIGHT SITS VITO GRAVANO, A.K.A. VITO GRAVES, A.K.A. DRACULA ... MAFIA DON AND MADMAN

IS THAT SO?



YES, SIR, MR. GRAVANO.

LOOKS LIKE THIS TOWN'S GOT ANOTHER HERO TRYING TO MAKE A NAME FOR HIMSELF.

FINE.

BUT NOT AT MY EXPENSE.

THANKS FOR LAYING OUT THE TRAP, MR. STEWART. I HAVE NO FURTHER USE FOR YOU.

Pardon?

YOU'RE FIRED. YOU KNOW THE WAY OUT.

SLAM!

TESTY
LITTLE
CREEP.

ANYWAYS...

I'M LOOKING
FORWARD TO A
GREAT WEEK.
SMITHERS, BRING
ME UP TO
DATE.

AS YOU KNOW, SIR, WE'VE BEEN
LOOKING FOR LINKS BETWEEN THE
MURDERS OF YOUR ASSOCIATES AND
SOME OTHER DISRUPTIVE SITUATIONS...
THE MATTER OF THAT LITTLE FAT **CLOWN**,
THE DISMANTLING OF THAT HIRED GUN
OVERT-KILL, AND THE INVASION OF
YOUR OFFICE BY A **COSTUMED
VIGILANTE**.

CALLING IN **THE
ADMONISHER** TO DEAL
WITH THE CLOWN WAS A
BRILLIANT MOVE, SIR.*

I
APPRECIATE
THAT.

WE'RE HAVING TO
DO A LITTLE DIGGING
ON THE LATTER TWO
INCIDENTS.

SORTING OUT THE
CLOWN'S KILLING SPREE
HAS BEEN EASIER. THERE'S
NO QUESTION HE CARRIED
OUT THE HITS ON THE
OTHER DONS, AND
THAT HE ACTED
ALONE.

CONTINUE.

*VIOLATOR #1--Tom.

REGARDING THE
OVERT-KILL
SITUATION, WE
HAVE SOME
NEW LEADS.

WE HAD
DRAWINGS
MADE OF THE
WEAPONS YOU
DESCRIBED,
AS USED BY THE
COSTUMED
INVADER.*

*ISSUE #6.

OUR PEOPLE AT THE F.B.I. AND C.I.A.
BOTH CONFIRM THE THEFT OF
THOSE WEAPONS. THE FIREPOWER
WAS EASILY SUFFICIENT TO PIERCE
OVERT-KILL'S ARMOR.

IT TOOK SOME
ARM-TWISTING, BUT
WE GOT A NAME FOR A
SUSPECT... SOMEONE
WHO SEEMS TO HAVE
STICKY FINGERS FOR
CONFIDENTIAL FILES,
AS WELL.

HE'S **TERENCE
FITZGERALD**, AN
OPERATIVE FOR
SOME ULTRA-
COVERT
AGENCY.

GET ME
EVERYTHING
YOU CAN
ON HIM.



ALREADY BEING DONE, MR. GRAVANO.

GOOD.

IF I FIND OUT HE'S IN **ANY** WAY CONNECTED TO OUR MYSTERIOUS HERO, HIS BALLS ARE **MINE!**

HELL!

EVEN IF HE'S **NOT** CONNECTED, WE'LL DUST HIM ANYWAYS!



YOU SEE, SMITHERS, I HAVE A CERTAIN REPUTATION, ONE WHICH I'M RATHER PROUD OF... UNDERSTAND?

YES, SIR.

I WILL NOT BE TRIFLED WITH.

SOME GOVERNMENT GEEK WANTS TO PLAY GOOD-GUY, FINE. AS LONG AS HE DOESN'T CROSS MY BOUNDRIES. **BUT!...**



...TO COME INTO **MY OFFICE** AND SHOOT IT ALL TO HELL...!

WELL, SMITHERS, THAT'S NOT A SIGN OF WAR. **THAT'S A SIGN OF SUICIDE!**

...HIS.

MY ASSOCIATES ARE ALREADY TALKING BEHIND MY BACK. I NEED TO SEND A SIGN THAT'LL SILENCE THEIR SNIGGERING.

FOR NOW, I'D LIKE A FULL REPORT ON THE ADMONISHER'S PROGRESS.



THEN, GET ME A STATUS FILE ON **OVERT-KILL'S** CURRENT CONDITION. THEY SAID THEY'D BE **DONE** WITH HIM BY NOW!!

AND...

...THEY'D BETTER HAVE **MORE THAN JUST A HEAD!!***

CRIPES, SMITHERS...

DEMONS! HEROES! CLOWNS! I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S **HAPPENING** TO THIS DAMN CITY, BUT IT'D BETTER KEEP CLEAR OF **ME!**

A FEW **DEATHS** SHOULD DO THE JOB.

*YOUNGBLOOD: STRIKEFILE #4.



...AN UNEXPECTED NAME IN THE NEWS TODAY IS **JASON WYNN**, A PREVIOUSLY LITTLE-KNOWN DEPARTMENT HEAD AT THE C.I.A. WYNN RECEIVED A CLEAN BILL OF HEALTH FROM HIS DOCTORS, ACCORDING TO REPORTS RELEASED TODAY, AND HAS ALREADY BEEN BACK AT WORK SINCE MONDAY.

HE UNDERWENT SOME SIXTY PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTS AFTER BEING DISCOVERED CRUMPLED ON HIS OFFICE FLOOR THE PREVIOUS FRIDAY. THERE ARE STILL FEW DETAILS REGARDING HIS ABSENCE WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY OF LAST WEEK, THOUGH ABDUCTION BY A HOSTILE AGENCY HAS NOT BEEN RULED OUT.

WYNN CLAIMS NO RECOLLECTION OF ANYTHING THAT OCCURED DURING HIS ABSENCE. ACCORDING TO A WITNESS, THE DIRECTOR WAS SPIRITED MYSTERIOUSLY OUT OF A C.I.A. GYMNASIUM. THE DISAPPEARANCE LED TO AN EXHAUSTIVE SEARCH WHICH ENDED WHEN A NIGHT CUSTODIAN FOUND HIM. APPARENTLY, WYNN HAD SOMEHOW RETURNED UNDETECTED TO HIS OWN PRIVATE OFFICE ON THE TENTH FLOOR, WHICH WAS LOCKED FROM THE OUTSIDE.



WHAT HAS DOCTORS CONCERNED IS WYNN'S UNEXPLAINABLE PARA-AMNESIA. REPEATED PROBES AND C.A.T. SCANS OF THE DIRECTOR'S BRAIN AND CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM HAS REVEALED NO INDICATIONS OF PHYSICAL TRAUMA OR INVASIVE MANIPULATION OF ANY SORT.

A HOSPITAL SPOKESPERSON, SPEAKING ON CONDITION OF ANONYMITY, EMPHASIZED THAT THERE IS NO SIGN OF INJURY WHATSOEVER AND THAT WYNN IS IN TOP PHYSICAL HEALTH. HOWEVER, HE WILL CONTINUE TO BE TESTED OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL WEEKS IN CASE SIMILAR SYMPTOMS ARISE.

WYNN WAS UNAVAILABLE FOR COMMENT, BUT HIS PERSONAL AIDE HAS RELATED THAT MR. WYNN IS BACK TO WORK "IN FULL FORCE" AND PROCEEDING AS IF THE ENTIRE EVENT NEVER OCCURED. THE C.I.A., N.S.A. AND N.S.C. ALL HAD NO COMMENT BUT THAT MR. WYNN IS BEING WATCHED CLOSELY FOR ANY SIGNS OF FUTURE ABNORMALITY.



GREAT DAY IN THE MORNING! LET'S GO OVER THE FACTS, IF THE C.I.A. DOESN'T MIND. A MEMBER OF THEIR **DIRECTORATE** DISAPPEARS, ala '**STAR TREK**,' APPARENTLY OFF THE FACE OF THE **EARTH**, AND THEN JUST SHOWS UP TWO DAYS LATER, THUMB IN HIS MOUTH, HUDDLED IN A FETAL BALL IN HIS OFFICE. HE REMEMBERS **SQUAT**, BUT THAT'S OKAY, 'CAUSE HE'S ONE OF THE GOOD OL' BOYS. SO, THEY GET HIM TO PEE IN A CUP, A DOZEN TOP-SECURITY DOCTORS WRITE UP A DOZEN UNREADABLE REPORTS, AND THEY SEND HIM BACK TO WORK WITH AN APPLE IN HIS LUNCHBOX. AT THE SAME TIME, THEY DECLARE IT **MIGHT** HAVE BEEN AN ENEMY ACTION AND YET DON'T BLINK AN EYE AT THE POSSIBILITY OUR TOP-SECRET BOY SCOUT IS **COMPROMISED!**

WAS HE KIDNAPPED OR **WASN'T** HE? PERHAPS HE WAS OFF IN ARUBA WITH MISS MONEYPENNY--OUR TAX PENNIES AT WORK! I BET IF YOU OR I TRIED THIS CRAP WE'D BE WALKING THE STREETS IN TEN SECONDS FLAT. I KNOW I'LL SLEEP BETTER KNOWING THAT BOYS LIKE THIS ARE IN CHARGE OF OUR **NATIONAL SECURITY!**



"BUT THAT DOESN'T MATTER. THESE G-MEN ARE ALL JUST INTERESTED IN PUSHING THEIR OWN PERSONAL AGENDAS..."

"... AND I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT PUBLIC SERVICE."

"THESE *HIGH AND MIGHTY* GOVERNMENT FACTIONS ALL HAVE THEIR LITTLE WARS TO FIGHT, AND SMALL GUYS LIKE YOU AND ME KEEP GETTIN' IN THE WAY!"

"WELL, I JUST HOPE THERE'S SOMEBODY OUT THERE WITH ENOUGH *GUTS* TO STAND UP AND FIGHT BACK!"



W
E
X
T

EVERYBODY PLUS...
OVERT-KILL!



®

SPAWN®

image

22
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PREDICTABLE.

THAT'S BECOME THE ESSENCE OF JOE SACIK'S LIFE. THE 15-HOUR WORK DAYS HAVE BECOME ROUTINE.

INDEED, JOE SACIK IS A LOYAL SERVANT OF THE MOB.

THAT TRUST IS AN EXHAUSTIVELY HEAVY BURDEN. AS HEAD OF ACCOUNTING, JOE HAS TO KEEP TABS ON ALL DETAILS OF TONY TWIST'S BUSINESS ACTIVITIES.

INFORMATION IS GATHERED. ORGANIZED. SANITIZED. CAREFULLY ACCOUNTED FOR. AN AUDIT WOULD SHOW A CLEAN, LEGAL OPERATION.

SKRITCH
SKRITCH
SKRITCH

SO JOE LABORS TOWARD THAT END, KEENLY FIDDLING ALL THE BOSS' DEALINGS INTO CLEAR HARMONY.

NO
SOCIAL
LIFE.

NO LOVE
INTERESTS.

NO
FRIENDS.

IN RETURN, HE HAS BEEN REWARDED WITH THE COMPLETE TRUST OF HIS BOSS--

-- VITO GRAVANO.

MAINTAINING THAT SHELL OF LEGITIMACY IS A MUST.

MAYBE
TOO MUCH.

THE
HIGHEST
PRIORITY.

ALL THE
PIECES ARE
EVENTUALLY
RELEVANT,
AND THUS
HE HAS
ACCESS TO
EVERY BIT
OF DATA.

?



HELLO,
JOE.

LET'S
TALK.



YOUR BOSS.

I WANT TO KNOW EXACTLY WHERE HE IS.

YOU SEE, THE FAT MAN'S BEEN ASKING FOR ME.

THOUGHT I'D ANSWER HIS CALL.

GNAANH...

H-H-HE...

I MEAN...



IF YOU DON'T CLEAR UP THAT STUTTERING... NOW...

...I'M GOING TO HAVE TO KILL YOU.

UNDERSTAND?

H-H-HE'S GONE!

I MEAN, HE'S NOT HERE. HE WANTED TO CHECK UP ON ONE OF HIS... uh... BUSINESS MATTERS.

YEAH, THAT'S IT!



NOW THAT WAS CONVINCING.

I DON'T HAVE TIME TO MESS WITH THIS. YOU JUST TELL ME WHERE VITO IS AND I LET YOU GO HOME.

OTHERWISE, WE'VE GOT US A PROBLEM, Y'KNOW WHAT I--

FREEZE!

SHAM!

HUH?

HUH?!

MAKE A MOVE AND YOU'RE **DEAD!** STEP AWAY FROM MR. SACIK, NOW, NICE AND SLOW.

AND I MEAN SLOW.

HOW'D YOU GET IN HERE ANYWAY?

PIVOTING SLOWLY, SPAWN GLOWERS WHILE CONSIDERING HIS NEXT MOVE. UNEXPECTEDLY, THAT DECISION IS MADE FOR HIM.

WITHOUT WARNING, HIS CHAINS LUNGE FORWARD LIKE RATTLESNAKES! THE SECURITY GUARDS DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT, BUT IT WASN'T THAT!

THEY REACT THE WAY THEY KNOW BEST: VIOLENTLY.

THIS NEW HELLSPAWN IS BECOMING LESS SURPRISED WHEN HIS COSTUME SPRINGS INTO ACTION. ITS LIFE IS JOINED TO HIS, HE KNOWS, SO IT HAS A STAKE IN HIS WELL-BEING.

THE HERO ALLOWS HIMSELF A SLIGHT SMILE.





EXCEPT AT TAX TIME, JOE ISN'T REALLY GOOD AT DEALING WITH PRESSURE. HE KNOWS THERE'S NO TIME TO HIDE THE SENSITIVE FILES EVEN AS HE GRABS THEM, BUT CAN'T STOP HIMSELF.



WHAT HAVE YOU GOT THERE, JOE?

NOTHING.

THE PAIR STANDS IN SILENCE, JOE REPLAYING THE LAST SIXTY SECONDS IN HIS MIND. HE GATHERS, ORGANIZES AND QUICKLY FORMATS THE INFORMATION.



HERE YOU GO!



WHAT?

THIS FILE'S ON TERRY...!

I'LL BE BORROWING THESE FOR AWHILE, JOE.

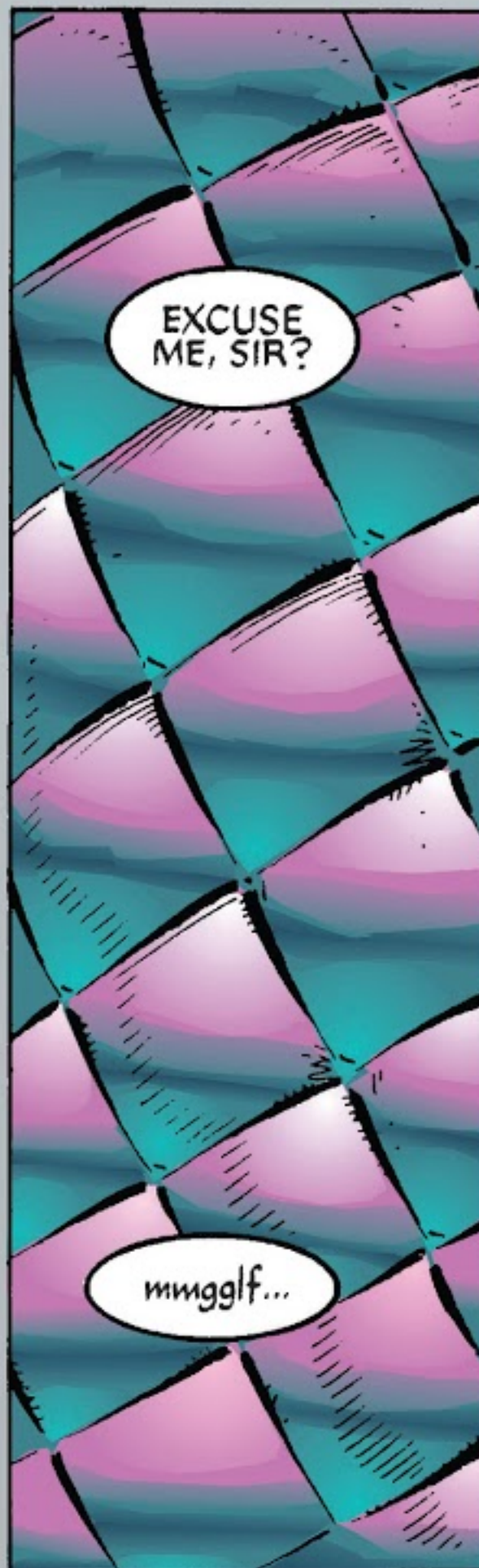
THANKS.

HE MELTS INTO A DARKENED CORNER. SECURITY PERSONNEL CAN FIND NO TRACE OF HIS VISIT.

AS FOR
JOE SAKIC,
THREE DAYS FROM
NOW, HIS BODY
WILL BE FOUND
UNDER THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
BRIDGE, WITH HIS
HANDS AND FEET
VICIOUSLY SEVERED.
DECAPITATED. EVEN
HIS GENITALS
WILL BE MISSING.

THE POLICE WILL
CONDUCT A FULL
INVESTIGATION,
BUT IN THE
ABSENCE OF ANY-
THING IDENTIFIABLE
ABOUT THE BODY,
WILL HAVE TO
CLOSE THE CASE OF
JOHN DOE 1994-714.

SUCH IS THE
LIFE OF A
TRUSTED
EMPLOYEE OF
VITO GRAVANO.



EXCUSE
ME, SIR?

mmggf...



JUST GOT
OFF THE PHONE
WITH OUR
SNITCH, JIMMY.
SEEMS HE'S BEEN
DOING HIS
HOMEWORK.



ONE OF
THE BUMS HE
KNOWS SAYS OUR
HERO USUALLY
HANGS OUT IN THE
SAME FOUR BLOCK
RADIUS.

I'VE
MAPPED IT
OUT ALREADY,
SIR.

mmmm-mmm...



I'LL DO
SOME EARLY
SCOUTING AND
ASK A FEW
QUESTIONS.



MEET YOU AT
PORT AUTHORITY
AT 10 O'CLOCK.

OKAY,
SIR?



SIR!

IT SEEMS
OUR LITTLE WEB
HAS FINALLY
CAUGHT US
A FLY.

I KNEW
THAT JIMMY
WOULD COME
THROUGH FOR US--
THOUGH I DIDN'T
EXPECT IT *THIS*
QUICKLY.

I FEEL
LOVED!

BY THE WAY,
DID YOU EAT THAT
LAST JELLY DONUT?

Mmmmm...

I WAS
LOOKING *FOR-*
WARD TO *THAT*
ONE...

OBVIOUSLY,
OUR PERSONAL CHAT
HAD A PROFOUND IMPACT
ON HIM. * IT'S AMAZING
HOW *RESPECTED*
US COPS ARE.

NOT
ME,
SIR.

BUT THOSE
REDDISH GELATIN
STAINS ON YOUR
SHIRT MAY JOG
YOUR MEMORY.

SO I'LL
BE SEEING YOU
AT TEN?

COUNT
ON IT,
TWITCH.

I GOT ME
A LITTLE
PAYBACK
ON MY MIND.

chomp
chomp

'EVENING,
FRED.

BLARFF!

LET'S GO,
TWITCH.

HEY
BOYS!

HOW'RE
THINGS WITH
THE REN AND
STIMPY OF NEW
YORK'S FINEST?

HARASS
A FEW MORE
OF THE
HOMELESS?

GOING OUT
TO CHASE MORE
GHOSTS?

C'MON,
YOU C'N
TELL
ME.

HEY!
MY
COFFEE!

* SEE LAST ISSUE -- Tom

ANOTHER DAWN BREAKS OVER NEW YORK CITY. ONLY A FEW SPRINKLES OF SUNLIGHT PIERCE THE TIGHTLY-DRAWN BLINDS OF THESE C.I.A. OFFICE WINDOWS. IT'S AS IF THE STRUCTURE ITSELF RESISTS THE REVEALING LIGHT OF DAY.

THE REPORTERS WHO COVER SECURITY ISSUES WOULD ENVY THOSE STRAY SUNBEAMS. THEY'VE LATELY HAD THEIR VERY POINTED QUESTIONS MET WITH CLEVERLY IRRELEVANT ANSWERS. THE COMPLETE TRUTH HAS BEEN LOCKED TIGHTLY AWAY. ALL ATTEMPTS TO SHED LIGHT ON ONE PARTICULAR NEW EMBARRASSMENT FOR THE AGENCY ARE POLITELY DIVERTED AND FIRMLY RESISTED.

THOSE GLIMMERS OF THE RISING SUN CAST FAINT, FLUID, EERILY EVOLVING SHADOWS OVER THIS ORGANIZATION'S DIRECTOR. HE SITS ALONE AGAIN IN THE EXECUTIVE SUITE... PONDERING... CALCULATING.

HIS NAME IS JASON WYNN.

WHEN NOTICED AT ALL BY THE LARGER WORLD, HE IS REFERRED TO AS A MINOR DEPARTMENT HEAD IN CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE. IN CIRCLES THAT TRULY MATTER, THOUGH, WYNN'S AUTHORITY AND REPUTATION DWARF EVEN THAT OF THE LATE J. EDGAR HOOVER. HE DIRECTS THE ULTRA-SECRET UNITED STATES SECURITY GROUP, THE NATION'S HIGHEST-LEVEL TASK FORCE, WITH JURISDICTION IN ALL SITUATIONS, DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN. ONLY THE PRESIDENT, HIS CABINET AND THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF ARE PRIVY TO HIS FINDINGS-- STRICTLY ON A "NEED TO KNOW" BASIS.

HOWEVER, RECENT EVENTS HAVE CAST DOUBT ON HIS CREDIBILITY. WYNN IS UNABLE TO EXPLAIN HIS TWO-DAY DISAPPEARANCE.* SOMEONE HAS LEAKED THE ODD CIRCUMSTANCES TO THE MEDIA. ALREADY, ENEMIES THROUGHOUT THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY HAVE BEGUN CIRCLING, LOOKING FOR A WEAKNESS TO EXPLOIT. THE WHITE HOUSE IS UNHAPPY WITH HIS INABILITY TO ACCOUNT FOR THOSE TWO DAYS, AND IS ANNOYED TO BE READING ABOUT IT IN THE PAPERS. THE INTEREST OF THE PRESS IN THIS NEW-FOUND SCANDAL HAS, HIS ENEMIES SUGGEST, COMPROMISED THE MOTIVES BEHIND ANY OF HIS CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS.

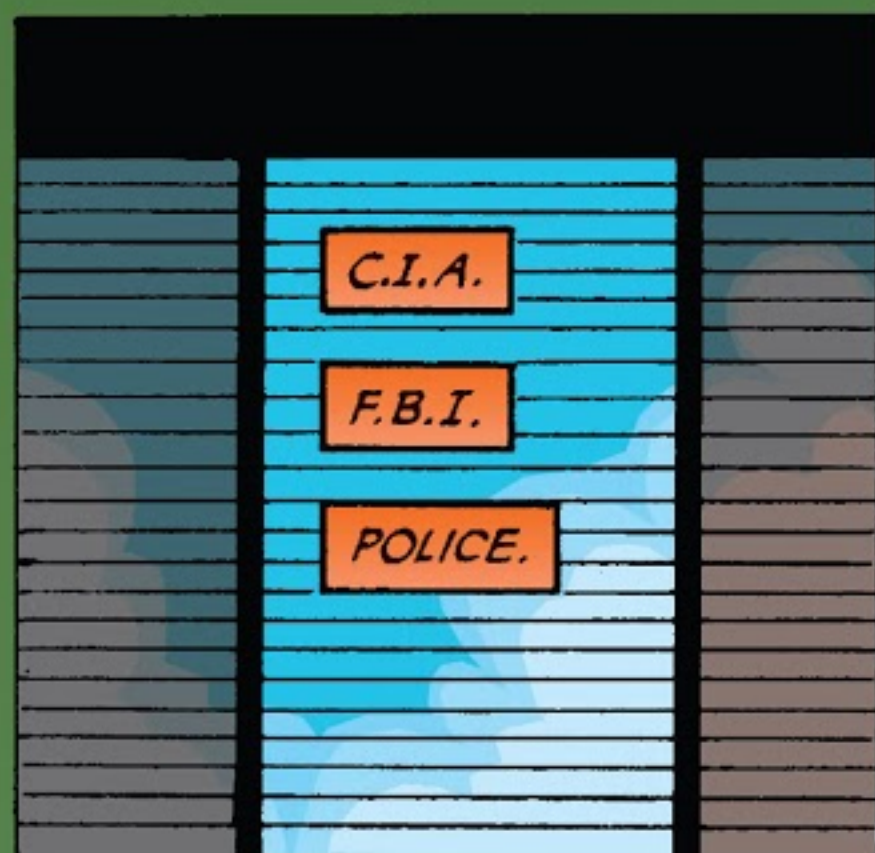
ONE OTHER SERIES OF INCIDENTS, IN WYNN'S OWN BACK YARD, IS POTENTIALLY VERY UGLY. TO WIT: A SECURITY BREACH AT A NEGLECTED UPSTATE ARMORY. MISSING ORDNANCE FROM SAME. CLOSER TO HOME, STOLEN PERSONNEL FILES. ONE SUSPECT HAS BEEN TARGETED: TERENCE "TERRY" FITZGERALD, CLOSE FRIEND OF AN AGENT, AL SIMMONS, SECRETELY TERMINATED AT WYNN'S BEHEST.

A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION HAS PROVEN THAT FITZGERALD IS CLEAN. UNFORTUNATELY, JASON WYNN CANNOT AFFORD EVEN THE APPEARANCE OF PROFESSIONAL INADEQUACY. THEREFORE, THE FITZGERALD INQUIRY WILL CONTINUE. HIS GUILT IS PREDETERMINED. WYNN WILL NOT FALL.

REPUTATION. POWER.

THESE ARE THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF MADNESS.

*HE WAS ABDUCTED BY AGENTS OF HEAVEN AND MADE A WARRIOR FOR THEIR CAUSE. SEE ISSUES 16 TO 18 -- TOM.



ALL HAVE BEEN TOLD
THE SAME STORY:



...THAT ONE OF THEIR OWN
HAS TURNED ON THEM. THE
ACCUSATION COMES FROM
SO HIGH UP THAT IT GOES
UNCHALLENGED. MEAN-
WHILE, "CONCRETE EVIDENCE"
HAS BEEN MANUFACTURED,
APPROPRIATE TO SATISFY
ANYONE'S QUESTIONS.



MAN,
WHAT A
BORE!

I HATE
FILLING OUT
THESE DAMN
REPORTS.

ESPECIALLY
WHEN I
HAVE TO FILL
'EM OUT IN
RUSSIAN.

WHAT
A PAIN.

TERRY FITZGERALD
CONCENTRATES ON HIS
MONITOR, TRYING TO FORGET
THE HARRASSING PHONE CALLS
AND FACE-TO-FACE THREATS.
PRACTICALLY EVERY LAW
ENFORCEMENT OR INTELLI-
GENCE AGENCY IN THE STATE
HAS MADE THEIR DISPLEASURE
KNOWN.

HE IS GRATEFUL THAT WANDA
IS UNAWARE OF THIS WITCH-
HUNT. HIS FAMILY'S
UNTOUCHED.



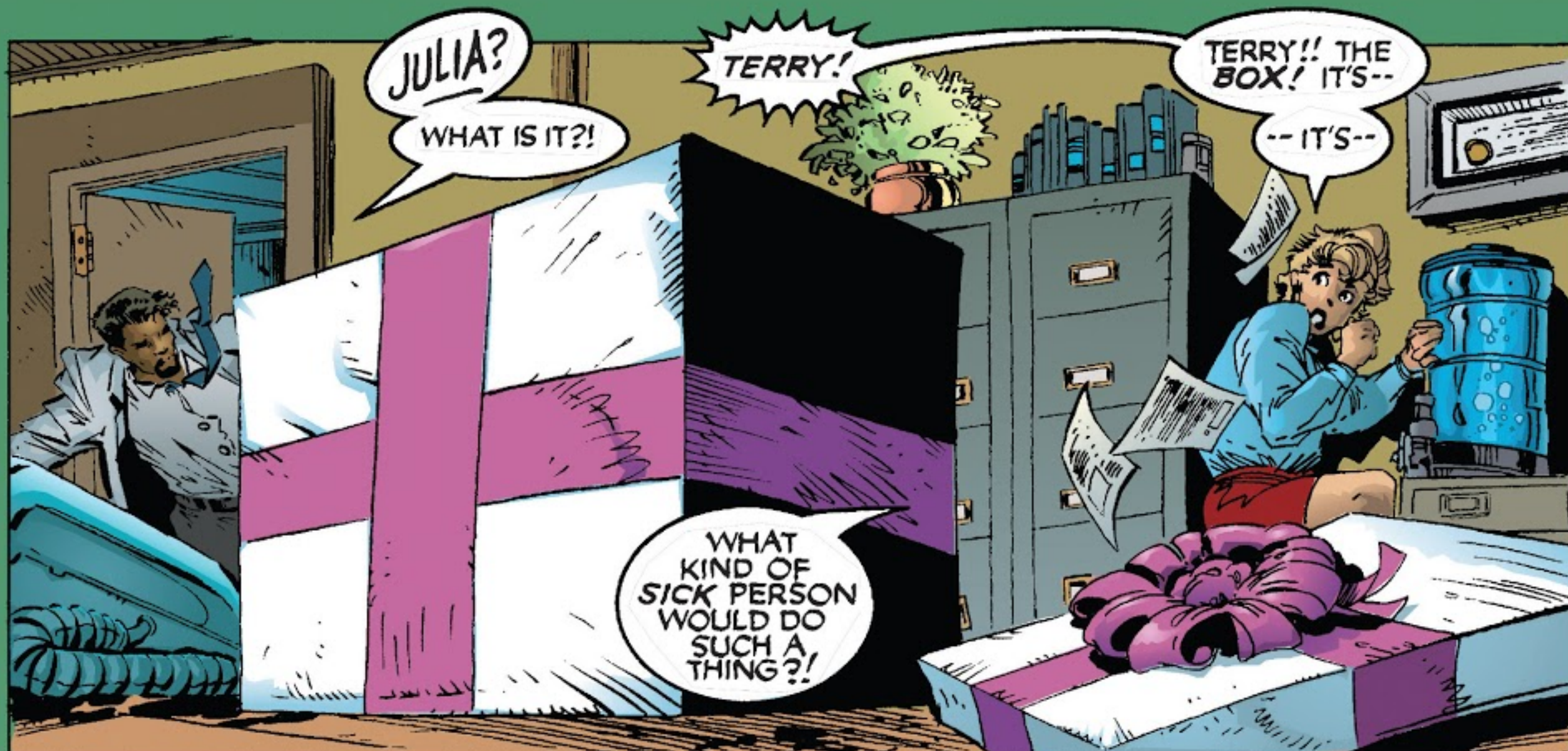
HE KNOWS
THAT WON'T
LAST.

COULD THE DEBACLE AT
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY*
HAVE HAD SOMETHING TO
DO WITH HIS PREDICAMENT?
HE WAS NEVER CONFIDENT IN
HIS FIELD ABILITIES-- WAS
HE BEING TESTED? IF SO,
IT WAS NO HELP WHEN THAT
UKRAINIAN NUCLEAR SCIENTIST--

EEEEK!

JEE-ZUS!

*ISSUES 19 AND 20--
NOT OUT YET! -- Tom



TROUBLE.

FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE THREATS BEGAN, TERRY'S FEELING SCARED. HE THOUGHT HE WOULD HAVE FIGURED OUT AND RESOLVED THIS PROBLEM BY NOW. HE'S COME TO REALIZE HE WAS WRONG.

POSSIBLY DEAD WRONG.



DEEP WITHIN THE BOWELS OF MANHATTAN'S BACK STREETS, AL SIMMONS, THE HELL-SPAWN, SITS ON A THRONE OF WASTE AND DEBRIS. IT WAS ASSEMBLED BY THE HOMELESS NOW UNDER HIS PROTECTION: HIS FIRST INSTINCT WAS TO SCOFF AT THEIR HANDIWORK, BUT WHAT ELSE COULD THEY HAVE BUILT TO SUPPORT HIS 400-POUND MASS? GRACIOUSLY, HE ACCEPTED THEIR GIFT, WHICH FORMALIZED HIS ROLE AS THE BOWERY'S DARK PROTECTOR...

...AND THEIRS,
AS HIS PEOPLE.

THEY NEED HIM
TO PLAY THE PART.

TO BE THEIR
SAVIOR. THEIR
NEW-FOUND GOD.

HE'S GRATEFUL-- IF A BIT UNCOMFORTABLE-- FOR THEIR DEVOTION. YET IT'S THE FAMILY AND FRIENDS FROM HIS PREVIOUS, HUMAN LIFE, WHO FILL HIS THOUGHTS. NOW BACK FROM THE DEAD, HE HAS AN UNHOLY MISSION. TO HIS DISMAY, HE FINDS THIS IS HAVING DIRE REPERCUSSIONS AMONG THOSE HE LEFT BEHIND.

GOD,
NO.

VITO
THINKS
I'M
TERRY.





YOU
SEE, MY
GOOD
MAN--

--I'M GOING TO
CLEANSE MYSELF OF
TWO RATHER LARGE
NUISANCES THIS
EVENING. **ONE** SHOULD
BE NEARLY FINISHED.

THE
OTHER
SHOULD
BE GETTING
HIS INVITE
TO TONIGHT'S
PARTY RIGHT
NOW.

YES,
SIR.

PHONE
MY OFFICE
AS SOON
AS HE'S
MOBILE.

IN THE
MEANTIME,
I NEED TO
CHECK UP ON
ANOTHER
OF MY...
SITUATIONS.
*



HOPELESS.

THAT'S HOW TERRY FEELS AT THE MOMENT. IN HIS RUSH TO GET HOME TO SEE IF HIS FAMILY IS ALRIGHT, HE'D FORGOTTEN THAT TODAY IS WHEN WANDA AND THE BABY GO TO VISIT GRANDMA BLAKE.

NORMALLY.

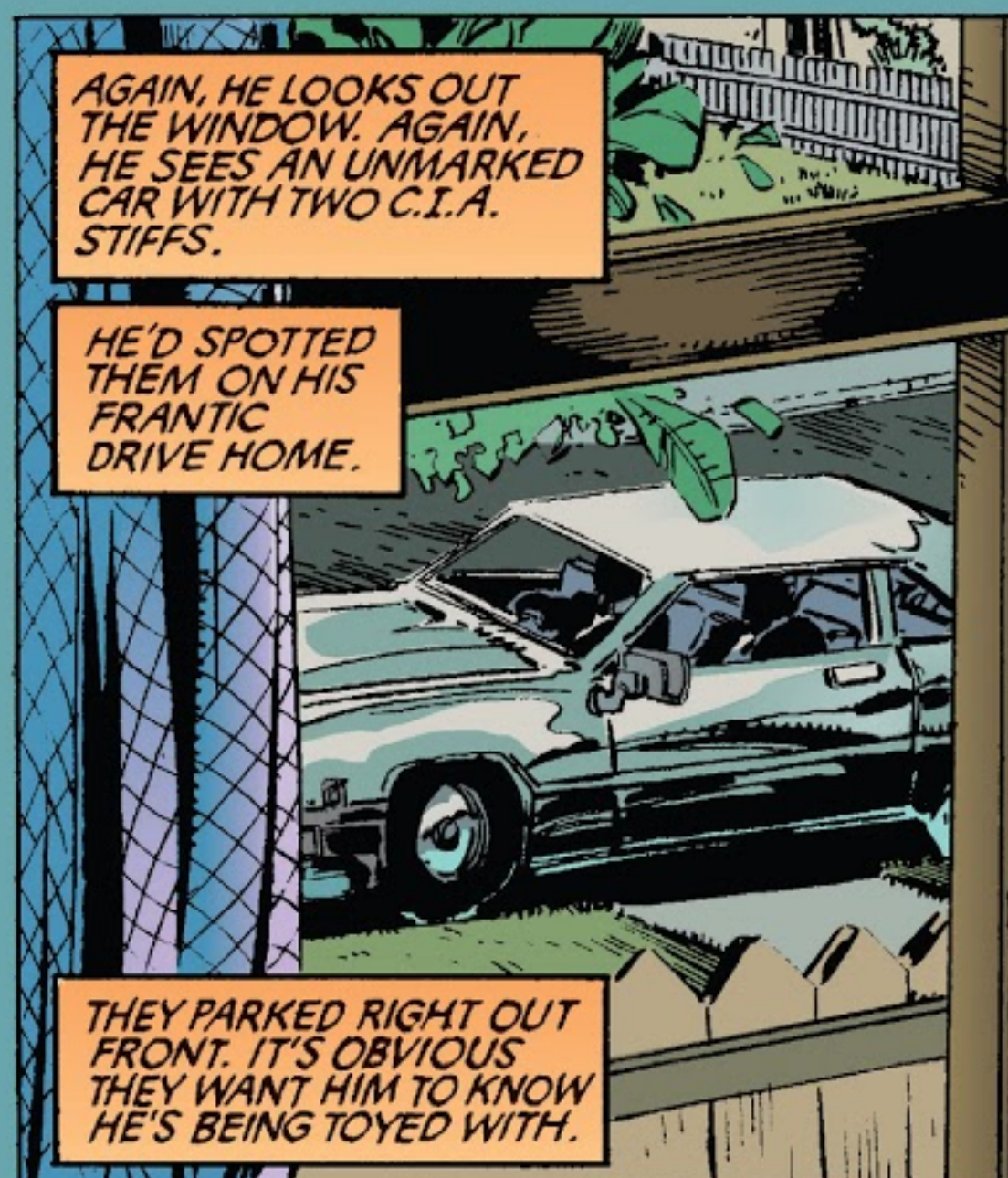
HE HASN'T BEEN ABLE TO GET THEM ON THE PHONE.



MAYBE THEY DIDN'T MAKE IT? MAYBE THEY'RE IN TROUBLE ALREADY? QUESTIONS RACE WILDLY THROUGH HIS MIND. HE CURSES HIS GROWING PARANOIA. AS A TRAINED SECURITY OPERATIVE, HE EXPECTS BETTER OF HIMSELF.

BUT NO. ONLY ONE THOUGHT REPEATS.

please, be okay. wanda.



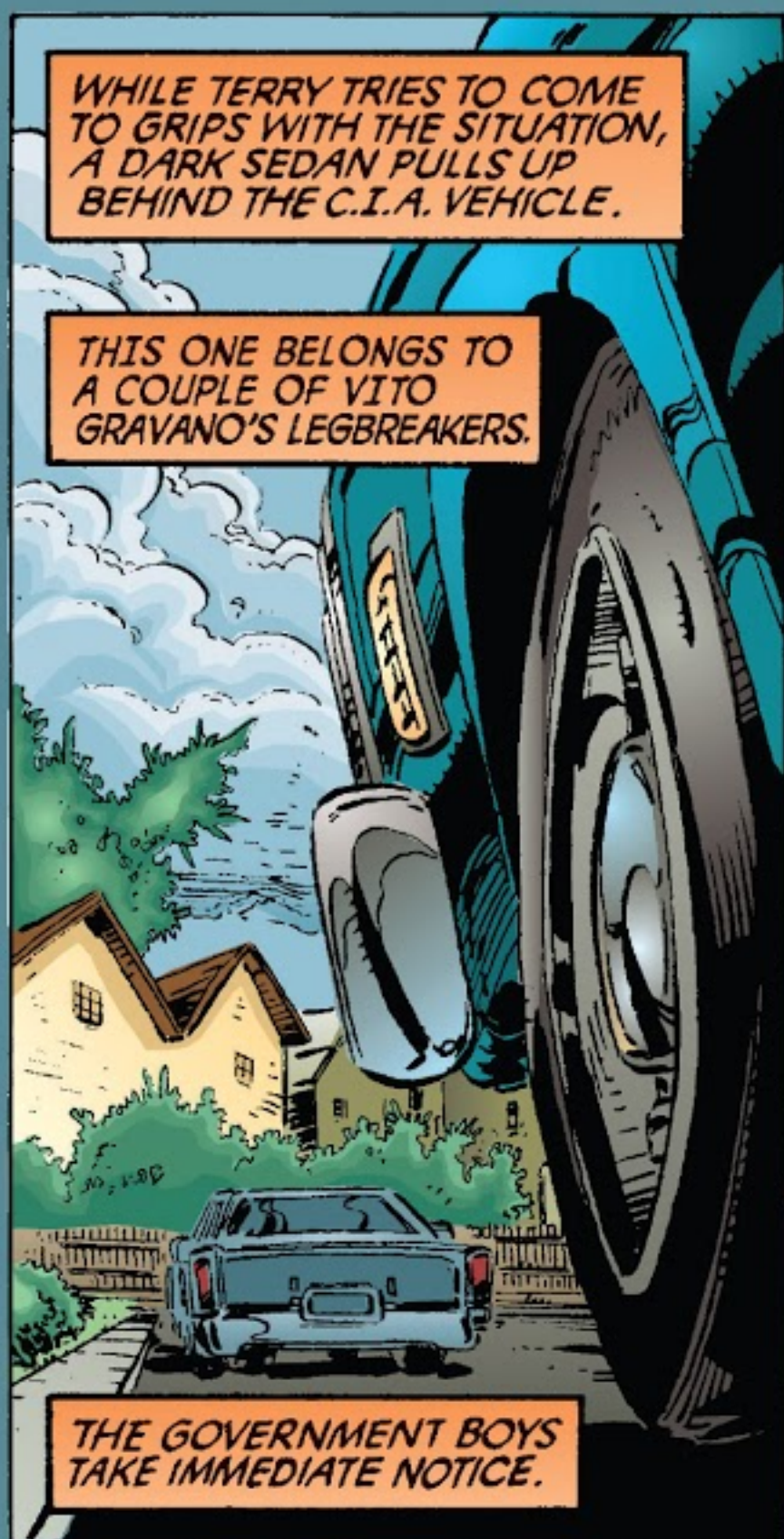
AGAIN, HE LOOKS OUT THE WINDOW. AGAIN, HE SEES AN UNMARKED CAR WITH TWO C.I.A. STIFFS.

HE'D SPOTTED THEM ON HIS FRANTIC DRIVE HOME.

THEY PARKED RIGHT OUT FRONT. IT'S OBVIOUS THEY WANT HIM TO KNOW HE'S BEING TOYED WITH.



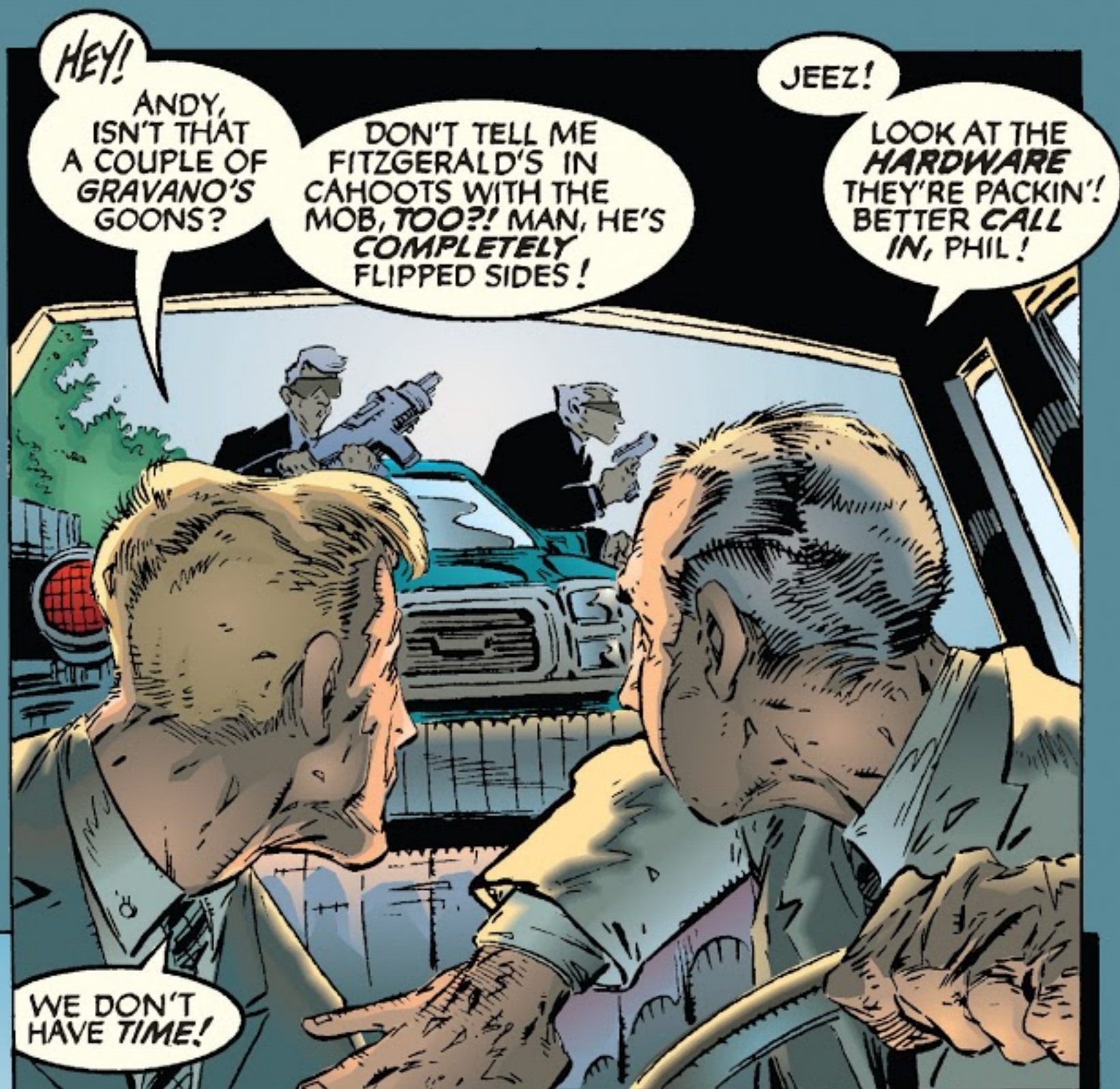
HIS PARANOIA IS OBVIOUSLY NOT UNFOUNDED.



WHILE TERRY TRIES TO COME TO GRIPS WITH THE SITUATION, A DARK SEDAN PULLS UP BEHIND THE C.I.A. VEHICLE.

THIS ONE BELONGS TO A COUPLE OF VITO GRAVANO'S LEGBREAKERS.

THE GOVERNMENT BOYS TAKE IMMEDIATE NOTICE.



HEY!

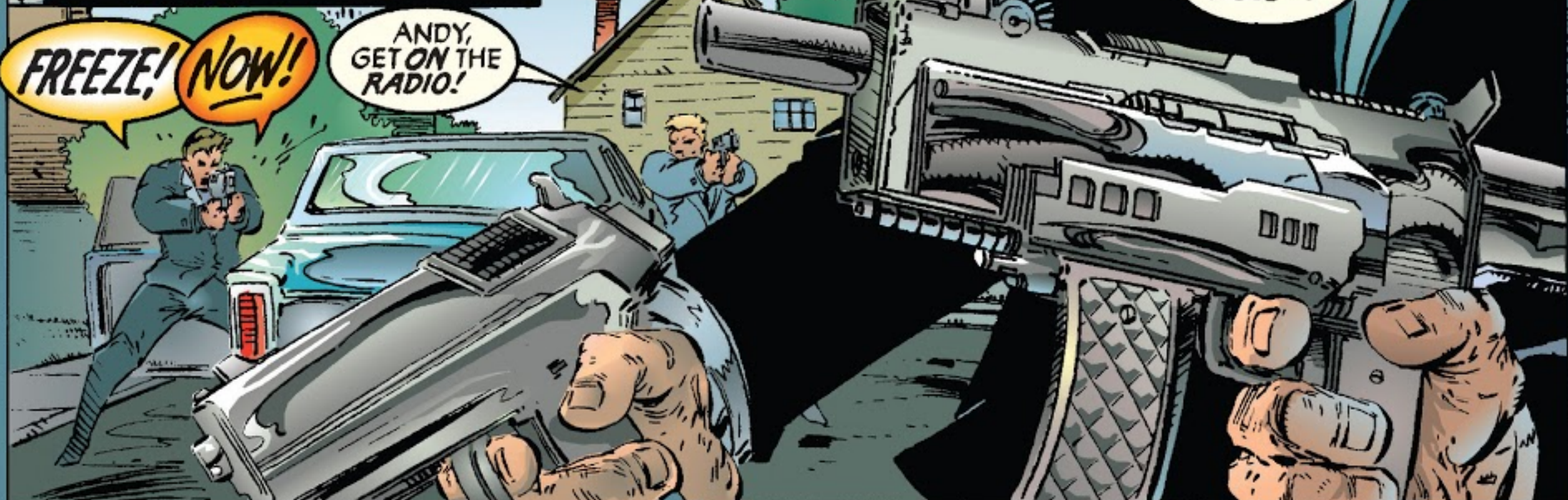
ANDY, ISN'T THAT A COUPLE OF GRAVANO'S GOONS?

DON'T TELL ME FITZGERALD'S IN CAHOOTS WITH THE MOB, TOO?! MAN, HE'S COMPLETELY FLIPPED SIDES!

JEEZ!

LOOK AT THE **HARDWARE** THEY'RE PACKIN'! BETTER **CALL IN**, PHIL!

WE DON'T HAVE TIME!



FREEZE! NOW!

ANDY, GET ON THE RADIO!

WHAT THE HELL--?



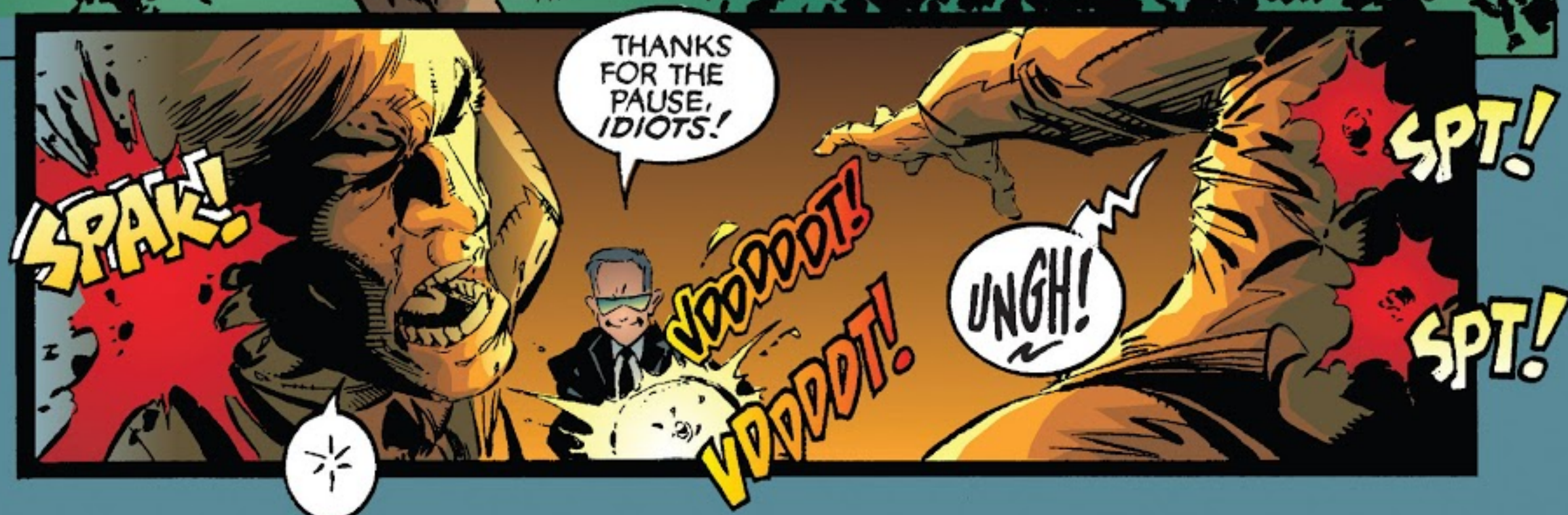
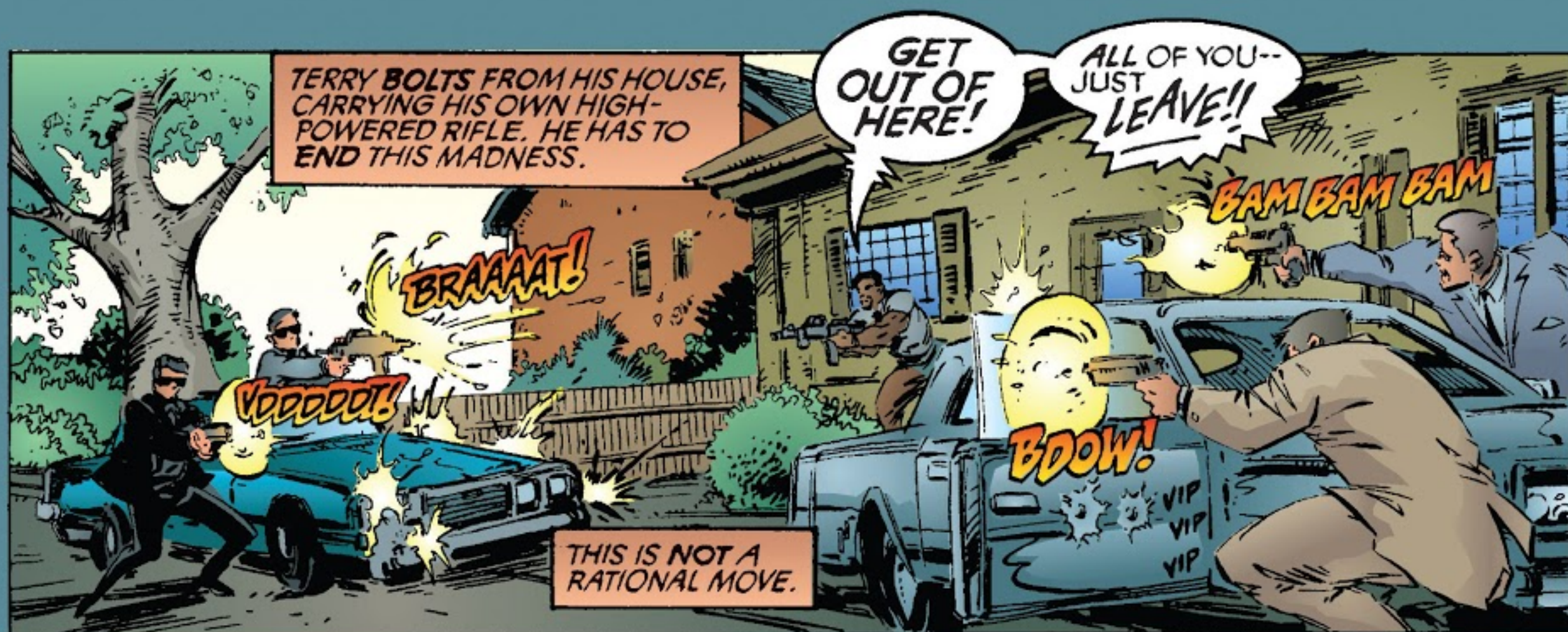
IT'S THE **FEDS!!**

LET'S GET 'EM, LOUIE!

BUDDA

BRAPARAPAP

BRAAAP



FINALLY, THE GUNS FALL SILENT.

LISTEN UP,
FITZGERALD!!
I KNOW YOU
CAN HEAR US!

WE'VE
GOT YOUR WIFE
AND GIRL! IF
YOU WANT TO SEE
EITHER OF THEM
AGAIN, YOU BE
IN THE ALLEY
BETWEEN FIFTH
AND SIXTH AT
27th--

--AT
MIDNIGHT!

AND YOU'D
BETTER BE
ALONE!

TIRES SCREECH
AS THE CAR
SPEEDS AWAY.

IT'S AT THIS MOMENT THAT TERRY'S
WORLD BECOMES DEVOID OF REALITY.
HE ISN'T AWARE THAT THE MAFIA
WISEGUYS WERE LYING. WANDA, CYAN
AND GRANDMA BLAKE WERE ACTUALLY
AT A PARK, QUIETLY OBSERVED BY
SOME OF GRAVANO'S MEN THEY CALLED
THIS INFORMATION IN TO THE THUGS
AT TERRY'S DOORSTEP, WHO WERE THEN
TO PASS HIM THE BOGUS 'KIDNAP' STORY.

OF COURSE, TERRY WOULD IMMEDIATELY
CHECK ON GRANDMA'S HOUSE.

OF COURSE, IT'D BE EMPTY.

THIS WOULD MAKE THE
BLUFF THAT MUCH
MORE CONVINCING.

WHAT THE MOBSTERS HADN'T
FORSEEN WAS THE PRESENCE
OF THE C.I.A.

THIS COMPLICATION
WAS EASILY RESOLVED.

NOW, TERRY STANDS OVER THE
TWO DEAD G-MEN. THE SECURITY
AGENCIES HAD NOTHING BUT
WYNN'S LIES TO FOLLOW UNTIL
NOW. NO WAY THEY'LL BELIEVE
A COUPLE OF HITMEN HAPPENED
ALONG AND HAD A SHOOT-OUT
ON HIS FRONT LAWN.

AS THE SOUND OF SIRENS
DRAWS CLOSER, AND THE
NEIGHBORS START TO PEEK
THROUGH THEIR CURTAINS,
TERRY DOES THE ONLY
THING HE CAN THINK OF.

HE RUNS.

HOURS LATER...

AL!

HEY, AL!

puff

puff

HE'S COMING!
JUST LIKE YOU SAID--
OVER ON SIXTH!

THEN THE
FILES WERE
CORRECT.

THE DOCUMENTS
PROCURED BY SPAWN
FROM VITO GRAVANO'S
OFFICE HAD MENTIONED
OVERT-KILL'S MIDNIGHT
APPOINTMENT...

YOU'D BETTER
HURRY, MAN, 'CAUSE
SOME BLACK DUDE
IN A *SUIT* IS RIGHT
IN HIS SIGHTS.

TERRY?!

I DON'T
KNOW
WHO HE IS,
BUT THAT
ROBOT'S
AS BIG AS
A **BUS!**

HE DON'T
STAND A
CHANCE.

WHATEVER
YOU'RE GOING
TO DO--
PLEASE-- BE
CAREFUL.

THIS IS
SERIOUS.

THANKS
FOR THE
WARNING.

I'VE GOT
A LITTLE
HELP
TUCKED
AWAY.





SPAWN KNEW THAT THEY MIGHT COME IN HANDY SOMEDAY, SO HE KEPT THE GUNS HIDDEN. ANYTHING SHARP, ROTTEN OR HEAVY ENOUGH TO DISCOURAGE IDLE CURIOSITY WAS USED AS CAMOUFLAGE.



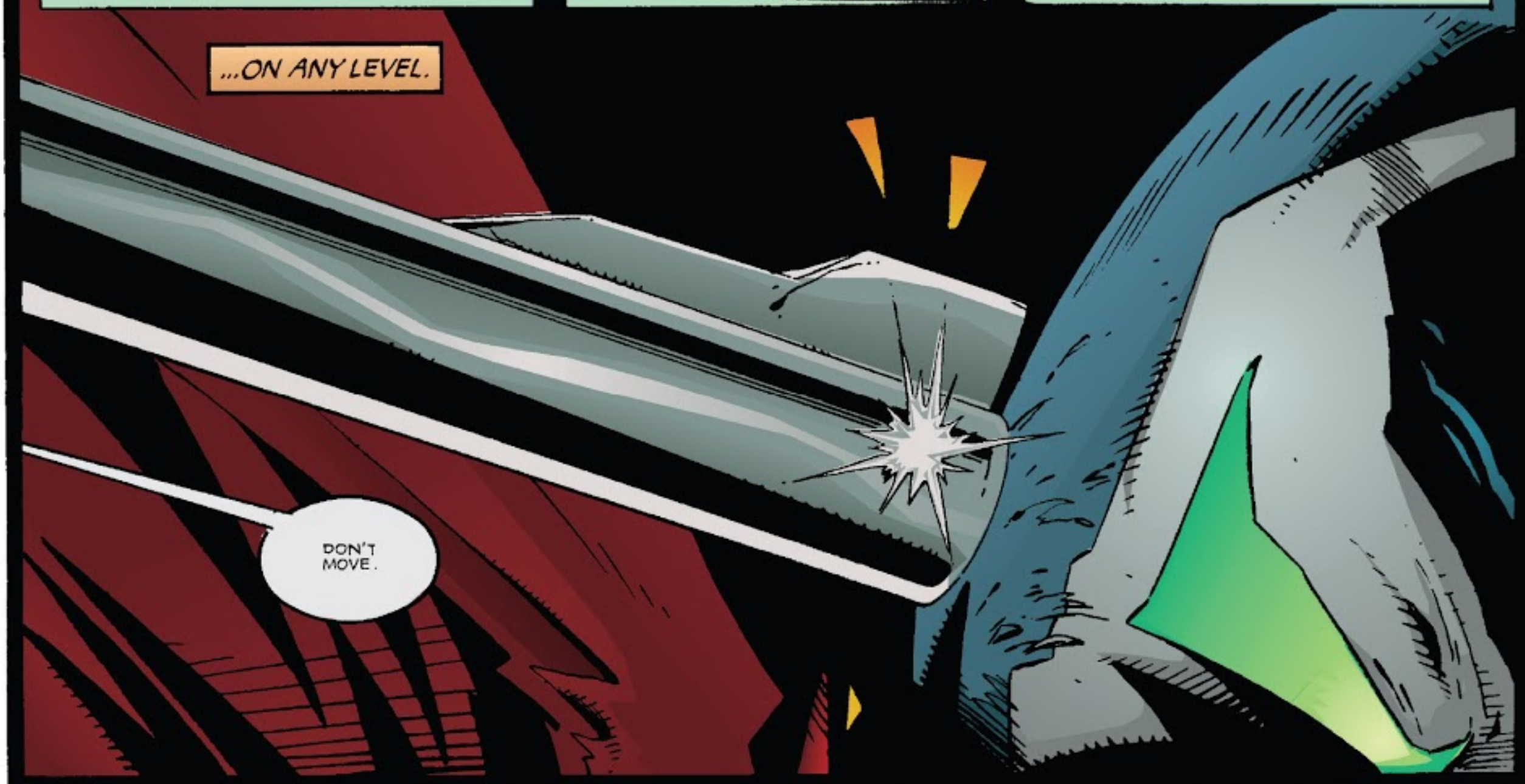
THESE WEAPONS HAD DECIMATED OVERT-KILL ON THEIR FIRST GO-ROUND. * THEY'LL WORK A SECOND TIME--IF HE CAN FIND THEM.

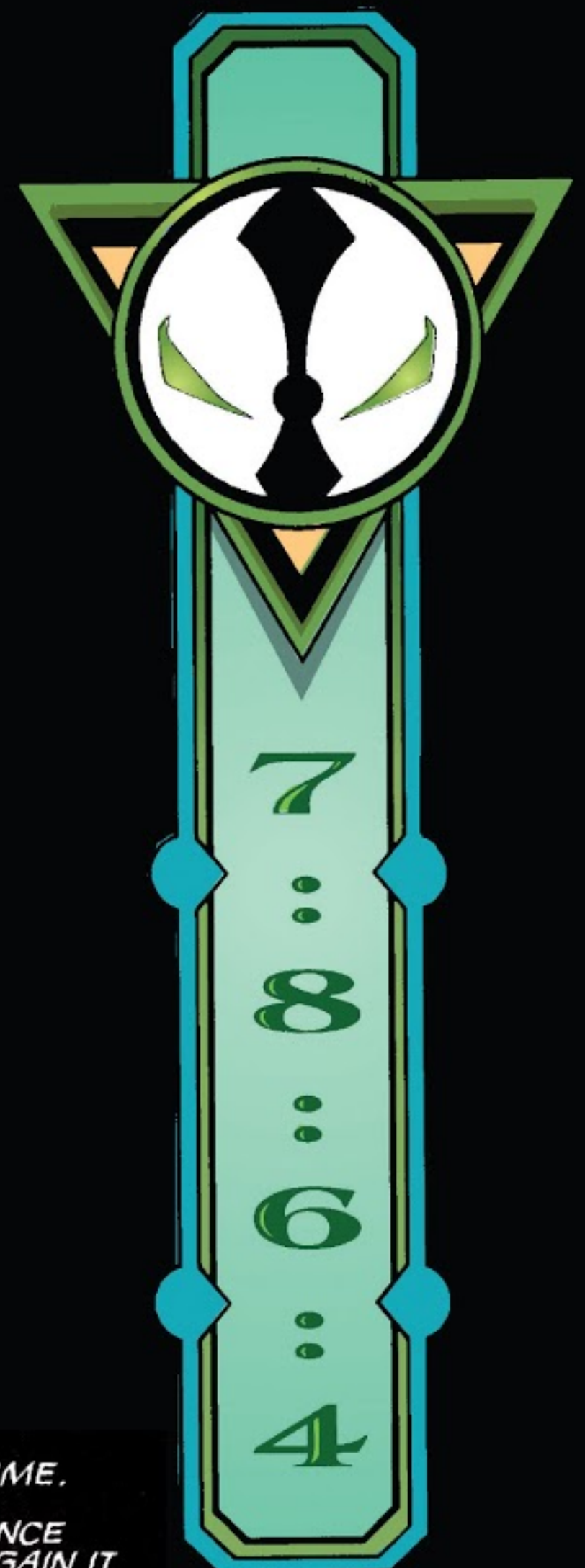
*ISSUE 7--Tom



SPAWN REALIZES THAT EACH PASSING MOMENT IS KEEPING TERRY IN A POTENTIALLY FATAL POSITION.

THERE'S NO TIME FOR DELAY...





TIME.
ONCE
AGAIN IT
BECOMES
AN ENEMY
TO SPAWN...



... AND TO HIS
FRIENDS.



TO BE CONTINUED.



image

23
AUG

DIGITAL
EDITION

SPAWN



McFARLANE
QUINN



JASON WYNN: HEAD OF THE UNITED STATES SECURITY GROUP, THE HIGHEST-LEVEL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY.

HIS SECURITY STATUS HAS BEEN COMPROMISED, AND THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE IS NOT PLEASED. WYNN IS UNDER PRESSURE TO RESTORE HIS REPUTATION IN THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY. TERRY FITZGERALD, A VICTIM OF CIRCUMSTANCE, HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED AS THE SOURCE OF THE TENSION... AND IS NOW IN DANGER OF HIS LIFE, AT WYNN'S DIRECTION.



SPAWN: AGENT OF HELL.

HIS VERY EXISTENCE HAS SET INTO MOTION A CRAZY RIPPLE EFFECT, WITH INCREASINGLY DANGEROUS CONSEQUENCES FOR THOSE AROUND HIM. SPAWN SIMPLY WANTS TO CREATE AND NURTURE A FAMILY, BUT THAT DESIRE HAS ALREADY DAMNED HIM AND NOW INADVERTANTLY THREATENS ALL WHO TRUST HIM.



VITO GRAVANO: MAFIA DON.

HIS OPERATIONS HAD RUN SMOOTHLY FOR YEARS, BUT LATELY AN UNKNOWN ATTACKER HAS SLAUGHTERED A NUMBER OF HIS MEN. GRAVANO HAS FOCUSED ON REMOVING THIS BLEMISH... SPAWN, HE BELIEVES... FROM THE FACE OF HIS CITY. HE IS UNAWARE THAT SOME OF THE INFORMATION DRIVING HIS HUNT IS INACCURATE.



WANDA BLAKE: WIDOW OF LT. COL. AL SIMMONS, A.K.A. SPAWN.

WANDA IS NOW HAPPILY MARRIED TO HER LATE HUSBAND'S BEST FRIEND, TERRY FITZGERALD, WITH WHOM SHE HAS A DAUGHTER, CYAN. SHE IS CURRENTLY UNAWARE OF AL'S LIFE STATUS, OR OF THE VICIOUS WEB IN WHICH TERRY IS RAPIDLY FINDING HIMSELF ENSNARED.



SAM BURKE: DETECTIVE, N.Y.P.D.

NOW CLEARED OF WRONGDOING IN THE DEATH OF CHILDKILLER BILLY KINCAID, BURKE IS ALLOWING HIMSELF THE LUXURY OF BRUTALITY IN THE NAME OF FACT GATHERING. SOMEONE (OR SOMETHING) CAUSED HIS SUPERIORS TO QUESTION HIS LOYALTY, AND HE WANTS TO HAVE WORDS WITH THIS INDIVIDUAL.



"TWITCH" WILLIAMS: DETECTIVE, N.Y.P.D.

THIS FATHER OF SEVEN IS ONE OF THE STATE'S TOP SHARPSHOOTERS. HIS SENSE OF FAIRNESS WORKS COUNTERPOINT TO HIS PARTNER BURKE'S OCCASIONAL LAPSES. METHODOLOGY AND ARM-TWISTING HAVE LED THE PAIR TO THEIR QUARRY-- THE COSTUMED MYSTERY MAN WHO HAS A FEW SERIOUS QUESTIONS TO ANSWER.

THESE ARE THE MAJOR PLAYERS IN AN INCREASINGLY TWISTED GAME OF CAT AND MOUSE. EACH IS SOMEHOW CONNECTED TO THE STRANGE EXISTENCE OF A DEAD MAN BROUGHT BACK TO LIFE. STRIPPED OF HIS IDENTITY... CHARGED WITH TREMENDOUS BUT EXHAUSTABLE POWER... AWAKENED FIVE YEARS AFTER HIS TIME TO FIND HIS WIFE REMARRIED... THESE WERE THE REALITIES AWAITING A MAN IN LOVE--

-- GIFTS GIVEN BY SOME UNHOLY CREATURE OF HELL.

A PRISONER OF HIS NEW LIFE ON EARTH, SPAWN'S ACTIONS HAVE TRIGGERED SEVERAL MANHUNTS BY VERY INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE. NONE IS PREPARED FOR WHAT TRUTH MAY EMERGE FROM THEIR INVESTIGATIONS...



... AND THE UNFOLDING TRAGEDY IS THAT AN INNOCENT MAN IS THE PRIME SUSPECT.

THIS BRINGS US TO TERRY FITZGERALD.

THROUGH STRAINED CIRCUMSTANCES, HE HAS BECOME THE TARGET OF NUMEROUS GROUPS:

C.I.A.

POLICE.

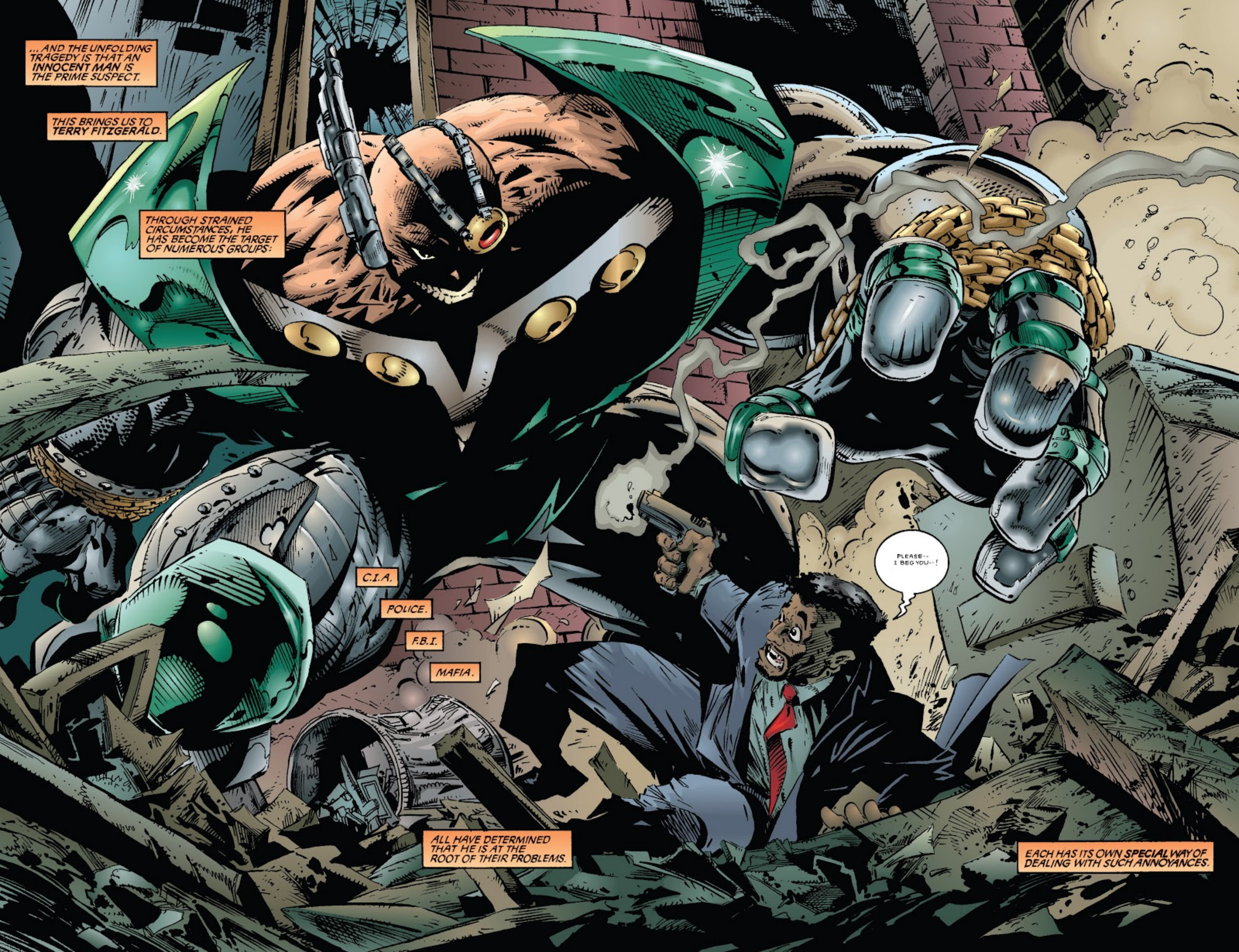
F.B.I.

MAFIA.

ALL HAVE DETERMINED THAT HE IS AT THE ROOT OF THEIR PROBLEMS.

EACH HAS ITS OWN SPECIAL WAY OF DEALING WITH SUCH ANNOYANCES.

PLEASE--
I BEG YOU--!





GET
ON YOUR
FEET.

YOU
WANT TO BE
A **HERO**?
THEN ACT LIKE
IT. I CAME HERE
TO **DESTROY**
A MAN.

NOT SOME
COWERING
DOG!

I SAID,
GET UP,
HERO!!

SINCE HIS
RECONSTRUCTION,
OVERTKILL HAS
BEEN PROGRAMMED
TO BELIEVE HE NOW
FACES SPAWN,
WHO NEARLY
DESTROYED HIM A
FEW WEEKS AGO. *

SMAT!

SPLUNK!

*ISSUES
6 AND 7
-- Tom.

Ok,
MY...

IT'S
HAPPENING,
JUST LIKE HE
SAID.

I'VE
GOTTA
FIND
AL.

HOW
PATHETIC
YOU'VE
BECOME.

NOT FAR AWAY...

I DON'T CARE *WHAT* YOUR HURRY IS, BUD, IT'S TIME FOR US TO HAVE A LITTLE CHAT. NOW STEP AWAY FROM THE WALL.

WATCH HIM, TWITCH.

TAKEN CARE OF, SIR.

I'M NOT ABOUT TO MOVE FOR YOU...

... 'CAUSE I'M LEAVING HERE, WITH OR WITHOUT YOUR PERMISSION.

YOU CAN EITHER FOLLOW AND HELP ME-- OR GET OUT OF MY WAY BEFORE I HURT YOU. THE CHOICE IS YOURS.

LISTEN HERE, YOU FRIGGIN' FREAK...

NO, **YOU** LISTEN!

I'VE GOT A FRIEND WHO'S IN DESPERATE NEED OF HELP AGAINST THE MAFIA'S CYBORG HITMAN... BECAUSE OF FALSE INFORMATION FROM C.I.A. AND F.B.I. OFFICIALS.

EVEN THE POLICE HAVE HELPED SCREW THIS UP. UNFORTUNATELY, I CAN'T FIND MY WEAPONS IN ALL THIS GARBAGE, SO I'LL HAVE TO THINK OF SOMETHING ELSE.



WHAT DO YOU THINK, SIR?

AIN'T NO WAY HE'S WALKING AWAY FROM US NOW!

HE'S BEEN A BLEEDING ULCER IN MY GUT FOR TOO LONG. I'M NOT GOING TO LET HIM SAVE HIS BUTT BY HIDING BEHIND. SOME COCKAMAMIE STORY.

GO SCREW YOURSELF, FAT MAN.

I SAID YOU'RE WELCOME TO JOIN ME, BUT I GUARANTEE THAT THIS ROBOT ISN'T EVEN GOING TO FEEL THOSE PEA-SHOOTERS YOU'RE PACKING.

THAT'S WHY I WAS LOOKING FOR MY CANNONS.* WE NEED FIRE-POWER... BIG TIME.

* SEEN IN ISSUE 7 --Tom--

FREEZE,
YOU MORON!
BEFORE WE SHOOT!



SUDDENLY...

**AL!
AL!**

IT'S HAPPENING!
YOU'VE GOTTA COME!

Uk?

Uk?

EMILY?!



GUY'S AS BIG AS A HOUSE! ALL SHINY AND NEW--! BUT THE GUY HE'S POUNDING AIN'T LIFTING A FINGER.

I THINK HE'S DEAD.

DAMMIT, NO.

SPAWN BOLTS, CURSING HIMSELF FOR THIS DELAY.

AS A GOVERNMENT ASSASSIN, HE WAS TRAINED TO STAY FOCUSED.

IT'S OBVIOUS HE'S LOSING HIS EDGE.



DETECTIVE WILLIAMS LINES UP HIS TARGET. SPAWN'S CHAOTIC MOVEMENTS DON'T DISTRACT HIM. NOR DOES THE FLOWING CAPE WHICH CONCEALS MOST OF HIS FORM. "TWITCH" WAITS FOR JUST THE RIGHT MOMENT.

THE SHOT IS A DIRECT HIT. TEARING THROUGH CARTILAGE AND SHATTERING A KNEECAP, IT'S THE FASTEST WAY TO DISABLE AN ASSAILANT.

SPAWN NEVER BREAKS STRIDE AS HE DISAPPEARS INTO THE UNLIT ALLEYWAY.

KRAK!



SHOCK.

THEN REALITY SETS BACK IN. SAM AND TWITCH DART AFTER THE FLEEING HERO.

JEEZ!

THIS IS GETTING NUTS!



THAT DAUGHTER OF YOURS IS REALLY A JOY, WANDA

THANKS, GRANNY.

I'M SORRY SHE FELL ASLEEP LIKE THAT, BUT SHE DOES LOVE GOING OUT TO THE PARK AND PLAYING. RUNS HERSELF INTO THE GROUND.

SO WELL BEHAVED. I WISH MY KIDS WERE THAT SWEET, GROWING UP.

HOPE YOU DON'T MIND ALL THE TIME WE SPENT THERE.

Oh-- HEAVENS, NO!



IT JUST MEANS I GET TO ENJOY YOUR COMPANY A FEW MORE HOURS.

YOUR VISITS ARE THE HIGHLIGHT OF MY WEEK, DEAR. YOU KNOW THAT.

OTHERWISE IT'S MOSTLY QUIET AROUND HERE-- ALTHOUGH I DID HAVE A BIT OF A SURPRISE NOT LONG AGO--

AL CAME TO VISIT ME.*

WHA--?!

HE'S AN ANGEL NOW. HE SEEMED A BIT TROUBLED, THOUGH. HE ASKED ABOUT YOU.

SAID HE STILL LOVES YOU.

GRANNY? HOW COULD AL COME TO...

*ISSUE 12-- Tom.



BRINGG!

Oh, COULD YOU GET THAT FOR ME, DEAR?

Um...

SURE. I'LL BE RIGHT BACK.

BRINGG!



HELLO.

WANDA!

THIS IS CONNIE! YOU NEED TO GET HOME! TWO MEN HAVE BEEN KILLED ON YOUR FRONT LAWN!

THE POLICE SAID TERRY KILLED THEM!!

MR. WYNN.

WE'VE JUST RECEIVED WORD THAT TWO F.B.I. AGENTS WERE SLAIN OUTSIDE THE HOME OF TERRY FITZGERALD.

THE HOUSE WAS UNDER SURVEILLANCE DUE TO INFORMATION PROVIDED THE BUREAU FROM THIS OFFICE.

OUR AGENTS WERE ABLE TO GET THERE AHEAD OF THE POLICE, BUT THE SITUATION IS GROWING RATHER TENSE.

THE F.B.I. OPERATIVES WERE KILLED BY TWO GUNMEN, MOST LIKELY FROM THE MAFIA.

WHETHER FITZGERALD HAS MOB CONNECTIONS HAS NOT BEEN DETERMINED AT THIS TIME.

SO FAR, FITZGERALD IS IN THE CLEAR.

JASON WYNN CLENCHES HIS TEETH. POLITICAL PRESSURE FROM THE WHITE HOUSE IS UNRELENTING. WYNN MUST BRING THIS CASE TO A CLOSE. HE WILL STICK THE CASE TO HIS PATSY, TERRY FITZGERALD.

ANY MISSTEP AT THIS STAGE WILL END WYNN'S CAREER. OF THIS HE IS KEENLY AWARE.

THE WITCH-HUNT WILL CONTINUE.

UNFORTUNATELY, FITZGERALD WAS NOT BEHIND THE SECURITY BREACHES WHICH EMBARRASSED WYNN-- AND WYNN KNOWS IT.

NOW, HIS UGLY TACTICS HAVE BACKFIRED, AND TWO F.B.I. AGENTS ARE DEAD. WYNN WEIGHS HIS CHOICES COLDLY.

GET TO THE NEIGHBORS.

NOW.

ACROSS
TOWN...

WHAT
WERE YOU
THINKING
?!!

BOSS...
WE HAD NO
IDEA THAT
THE FEDS
WOULD
BE...

QUIET!

LISTEN.
I'M ONLY
GOING TO SAY
THIS **ONCE**. YOUR
ORDERS WERE TO
GET FITZGERALD TO
A RENDEZVOUS
WITH OVERT-
KILL.

PERIOD!

...NOT TO KILL
TWO F.B.I. AGENTS! *
I DON'T **NEED**
THAT KIND OF
ATTENTION.

THE
CARTEL'S
ALREADY
BUSTING MY
BALLS!

*LAST
ISSUE
--Tom--

I'VE GOT ENOUGH
PROBLEMS ALREADY. *
YOU GO BACK OUT THERE
AND MAKE THIS GO AWAY.
AND I DON'T MEAN A
LITTLE BIT, I MEAN
ALL OF IT!

CAPICE?

YES,
SIR...

GOOD...

*VIOLATOR
MINI-SERIES,
ISSUE 3 --Tom--



"... I HOPE FITZGERALD WAS DUMB ENOUGH TO RUSH RIGHT OVER FOR THAT LITTLE 'BUSINESS MEETING.'"

HE WAS.



FINE.

HAVE IT YOUR WAY, HERO. YOU DON'T WANT TO FIGHT...?



THEN I HOPE YOU WON'T MIND IF I JUST CARRY ON IN SPITE OF YOU--

--LIKE SEEING HOW FINE POWDER I CAN CRUSH FROM YOUR BONES--

--WITHOUT SPLITTING YOUR BODY OPEN!

UNGH!

FROM DENSE
SHADOWS COMES A
CRIMSON BLUR.

ITS MOVEMENTS
ARE QUICK.
DELIBERATE.

MOVING WITH
SPECIFIC INTENT,
IT SNATCHES
TERRY'S
BATTERED BODY...

... AND TOUCHES
DOWN 20 FEET
AWAY, KNEE DEEP
IN GARBAGE.

HEY!



STAY
HERE.

I'LL
HANDLE
THIS.

⌞cough⌟
NO...



GOTTA
SAVE
'EM...

FOOL!



YOU'RE
A **DEAD**
MAN.

INTERNAL BLEEDING.
CRACKED RIBS. FRACTURED
JAW. NONE OF THESE MATTER
TO TERRY AS HE SPRINTS FOR
THE STREETS. HE STILL
BELIEVES THE MAFIA HAVE
HIS WIFE AND CHILD.

THEIR BLUFF HAD WORKED.



HA HA HA HA HA

YET FOR ALL HIS
EFFORT, TERRY
IS ONLY HUMAN--
NOT NEARLY
FAST ENOUGH
TO OUTFRAN A
BIO-LASER
STREAM.

TERRY.

No!

BEFORE SPAWN CAN MOVE, HIS CAPE DOES. TO THIS POINT, HIS COSTUME HAD ONLY COME TO LIFE WHILE PROTECTING ITS HOST.

TONIGHT, IT SENSED A FURTHER USE.

ZAT!

SPAWN GRABS A STRAY TWO-BY-FOUR. HE KNOWS IT CAN CAUSE NO DAMAGE... BUT IT CAN OFFER A SLIGHT DISTRACTION...

... ONE THAT WILL ALLOW TERRY TO ESCAPE.

SWAK!

FINALLY! MY PROPER TARGET. WITHOUT YOUR GUN...

...YOU'RE NOTHING!

puff! puff!

CRIPES!

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?!

I => puff <= DON'T KNOW, SIR--

POW!
KRAK!
SMET!

"... BUT OBVIOUSLY HE WASN'T LYING TO US."

"CRAP!"

"THAT MEANS THE REST OF HIS STORY'S *PROBABLY* TRUE, TWITCH."

"WHICH MEANS THERE JUST MAY BE A MULTI-AGENCY MANHUNT GOING ON."

"JUST MY LUCK."

WAT!!

"SIR?"

"YEAH! YEAH! I'M THINKING!"

"WE CAN'T AFFORD THAT MUCH *TIME*..."

"... BECAUSE UNLESS WE TERMINATE THIS BATTLE, WE'RE NOT GOING TO GET ANY ANSWERS FROM THIS 'AL' GUY!"

CAR'S TOO FAR AWAY FOR US TO RADIO IN, SO-- WE'VE ONLY GOT ONE CHOICE--

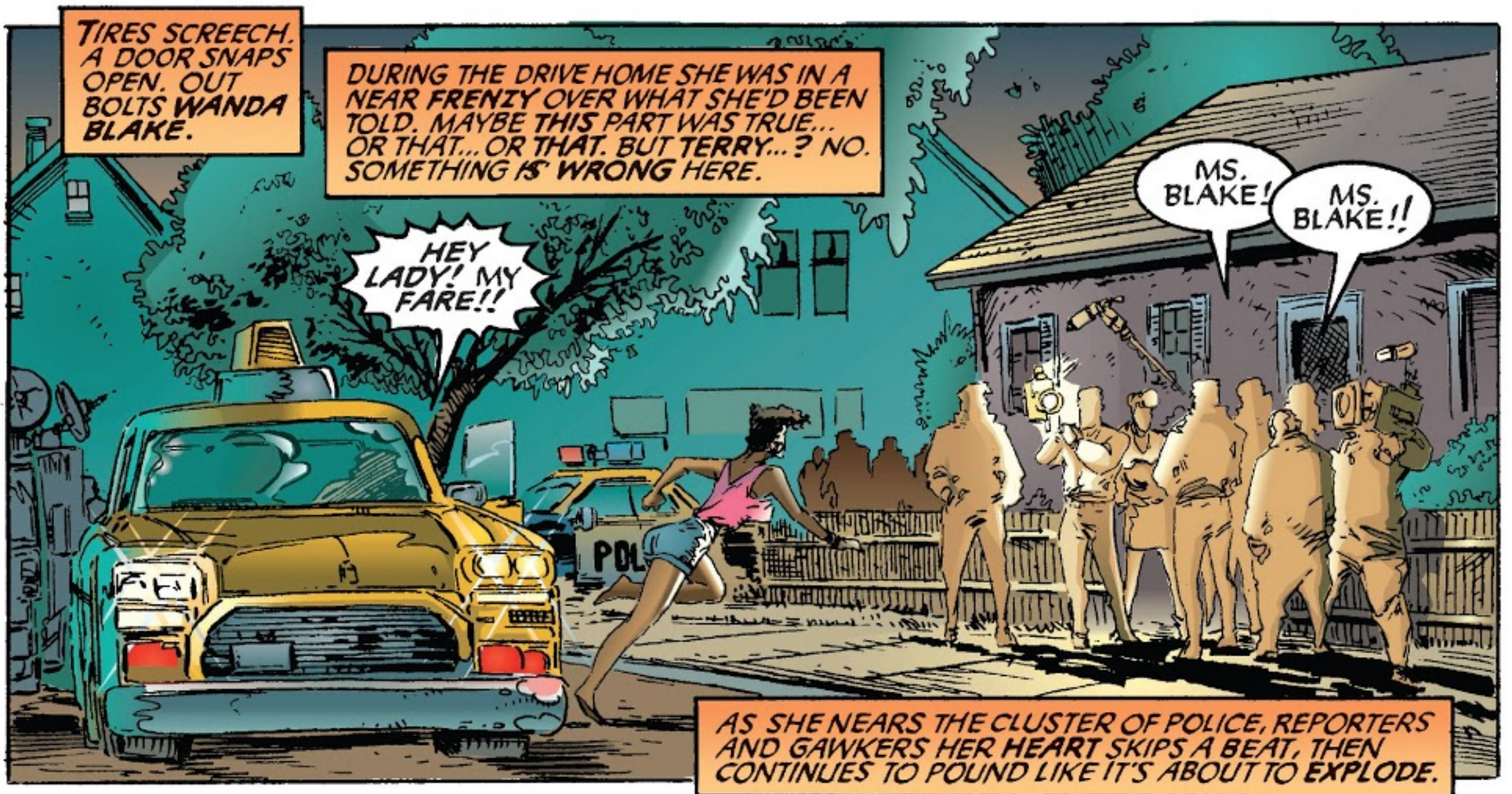
--SHOOT!

PING

PING

PING

TIME TO POP THAT ZIT YOU CALL A HEAD.



TIRES SCREECH. A DOOR SNAPS OPEN. OUT BOLTS WANDA BLAKE.

DURING THE DRIVE HOME SHE WAS IN A NEAR FRENZY OVER WHAT SHE'D BEEN TOLD. MAYBE THIS PART WAS TRUE... OR THAT... OR THAT. BUT TERRY...? NO. SOMETHING IS WRONG HERE.

HEY LADY! MY FARE!!

MS. BLAKE!

MS. BLAKE!!

AS SHE NEARS THE CLUSTER OF POLICE, REPORTERS AND GAWKERS HER HEART SKIPS A BEAT, THEN CONTINUES TO POUND LIKE IT'S ABOUT TO EXPLODE.



IS IT TRUE YOUR HUSBAND KILLED

F.B.I.

TRAITOR

FLED THE SCENE

MURDER

SHE'S ASSAULTED WITH A HUNDRED QUESTIONS AND THIRTY VERSIONS OF THE EVENTS. SIMULTANEOUSLY.

EXCUSE ME, FOLKS. LET ME PASS.



MS. BLAKE!

MS. BLAKE!

I'M SORRY, MA'AM. THINGS DON'T LOOK GOOD RIGHT NOW. I'M GOING TO NEED YOU TO COME DOWN TO THE STATION.

THERE'S BEEN A MULTIPLE MURDER, AND NO SIGN OF YOUR HUSBAND. WE'VE PUT OUT AN A.P.B. CALLING FOR HIS ARREST...



No!

PLEASE!

NOT TERRY!

NOT MY TERRY!

IT CAN'T BE!

SPOTTING A HANDFUL OF NEIGHBORS HUDDLED ACROSS THE STREET, WANDA RACES TO THEM.

PLEASE!

YOU MUST HAVE SEEN SOMETHING! ANYTHING!



PLEASE, YOU'VE GOT TO HELP. THIS CAN'T BE TRUE!

THIS CAN'T BE TRUE.

MR. HORNE?

ANNE?



WE'VE SEEN NOTHING.



WANDA IS FAR TOO LATE. JASON WYNN'S MEN HAD ALREADY "CONSULTED" WITH HER NEIGHBORS.

YOU SEE, ANDREW AND KAREN HORNE THESE KIND AND GENEROUS PEOPLE, WERE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS.



AN INSURANCE ADJUSTER FOR OVER SEVENTEEN YEARS, CHRIS ALBRECHT LED A FAIRLY MUNDANE LIFE.

FOR THREE YEARS IN THE MID-SEVENTIES, THOUGH, HE DIDN'T FILE HIS INCOME TAX FORMS. AN AUDIT AT THIS TIME WOULD RUIN HIM.

I'M SORRY.



AS FOR ANNE THOMOPOULOS, SHE HAS ALWAYS BEEN A PLEASANT NEIGHBOR. NICE FAMILY, TOO. BUT SHE HAS A SKELETON IN HER CLOSET.

SHE HAD A CHILD OUT OF WEDLOCK-- A SON-- WHEN SHE WAS SEVENTEEN. AT PRESENT HE IS IN JAIL FOR CAR THEFT. HIS PAROLE HEARING IS IN TWO MONTHS. SHE'S BEEN PROMISED HIS FREEDOM.



AS THE FINAL DOOR IS LATCHED,
SHE FALLS TO HER KNEES,
SOBBING.

WANDA NEVER WANTED TO ADMIT IT TO HERSELF, BUT SHE ALWAYS KNEW THIS DAY WOULD COME. BEING A WIDOW TO ONE GOVERNMENT INTELLIGENCE AGENT WASN'T ENOUGH, SHE HAD TO GO MARRY ANOTHER. SHE'D ACTED AS IF, BY KEEPING A SAFE DISTANCE FROM THEIR WORK, SHE WOULD SHIELD THEM ALL FROM ANY CONSEQUENCES OF... WELL, WHATEVER THAT WORK WAS. "IGNORANCE IS BLISS," SHE'D TOLD HERSELF.

THAT ILLUSION HAS JUST BEEN SHATTERED... TERMINALLY. WANDA KNOWS SHE'D'VE SEEN WARNING LIGHTS FLASHING IF ONLY SHE'D OPENED HER EYES A BIT WIDER.

SHE SAYS A QUICK
PRAYER FOR HER CHILD,
WHO'S BEEN LEFT...
THANK GOD...
AT GRANNY BLAKE'S.

THEN, SHE BREAKS DOWN AGAIN,
HER BODY JERKING WITH EACH BREATH.

TRAGICALLY, HER PRIVACY IS
SHORT-LIVED AS THE ASSEMBLED
NEWSHOUNDS POUNCE,
FEEDING ON HER GRIEF.



WAVES OF PAIN SHOOTING THROUGH HIS BODY, TERRY MANAGES TO PUSH AN EMPTY DUMPSTER DOWN THE ALLEY.

HE WON'T ABANDON THE COSTUMED VIGILANTE.

WITH EACH AGONIZING STEP, MOMENTUM IS BUILT--





-- JUST ENOUGH TO
TOPPLE A 1200-LB.
CYBORG THAT
WAS ALREADY
OFF-BALANCE.

WHA--?!

WHAK!

IDIOT!

I THOUGHT
YOU'D FLED!

WERE YOU
WAITING FOR
YOUR FRIEND?
HERE HE IS!

UNFFK!

WHAT'RE
YA DOIN',
TWITCH?
YOUR GUN'S
USELESS!

I'VE
GOT AN
IDEA,
SIR.



BLAM!

WITH UNCANNY ACCURACY, THE BULLET ENTERS OVERTKILL'S BODY THROUGH A SMALL OPENING IN THE EAR CAVITY...

... INTERRUPTING THE ELECTRIC FLOW FOR A NANOSECOND.

TWITCH HAD HOPED TO CAUSE SOME SYSTEMIC DISRUPTION.

THE RESULT WAS COMPLETELY UNEXPECTED.

YOUNGBLOOD.
BADROCK.
YOUNGBLOOD.
BADROCK.
BADROCK.

THE CYBORG LUMBERS OFF. IT HAS A NEW DIRECTIVE. *

*SEE YOUNGBLOOD #47--Tom.!

A comic book panel depicting a scene of urban devastation. In the foreground, a man in a light-colored suit and tie stands amidst rubble, looking down at a large, bloody mess on the ground. The mess appears to be a person's body, with significant blood splatters. In the background, another man in a dark suit and glasses stands looking on. The setting is a city street with damaged buildings and debris. A speech bubble from the man in the light suit reads "WHAT A BLOODY MESS." Another speech bubble from the man in the dark suit reads "QUITE LITERALLY."

WHAT A
BLOODY
MESS.

QUITE
LITERALLY.

CONCLUDED
NEXT ISSUE.





image

24
SEP

DIGITAL
EDITION

SPAWN[®]



McFARLANE
OLIFF

IT'S BEEN A VERY STRANGE NIGHT FOR DETECTIVE SAM BURKE. WHILE HUNTING THE MYSTERIOUS COSTUMED VIGILANTE RESPONSIBLE FOR BURKE'S TEMPORARY SUSPENSION FROM THE POLICE FORCE, BURKE AND HIS PARTNER-- "TWITCH" WILLIAMS-- UNEXPECTEDLY FOUND THEMSELVES IN THE MIDDLE OF A MUCH BIGGER SCENARIO.

VARIOUS SOURCES LED THEM TO THE LAIR OF A HERO REVERED BY THE HOMELESS OF NEW YORK'S BOWERY. THEY CAUGHT HIM OFF-GUARD AS HE PREPARED FOR A SHOWDOWN TWO MILES UPTOWN WITH THE MAFIA'S CYBORG HITMAN, OVERTKILL. SPAWN EVADED THE PURSUIT.

THE LAWMEN LATER CAUGHT UP WITH SPAWN AS HIS BATTLE REACHED ITS CLIMAX. WILLIAMS' SHARPSHOOTING SAVED SPAWN'S LIFE-- AND THAT OF ONE OTHER. ALSO LYING IN A BLOODY HEAP WAS AN UNIDENTIFIED CIVILIAN.

AS BURKE STARES DOWN AT THE TWO BROKEN FIGURES, HE MUTTERS HIS PROFESSIONAL ASSESSMENT:

CRIPES!

THE
PAPERWORK
ON THIS IS
GONNA KILL
ME.

SO IT
WOULD
SEEM,
SIR.

IT'S OBVIOUS THAT HE'S NOT EVEN REMOTELY AWARE OF THE MAGNITUDE OF WHAT'S JUST HAPPENED.

HE'LL CATCH ON
SOON ENOUGH.





KNEELING OVER SPAWN'S LIMP FORM, 'TWITCH' CHECKS FOR ANY SIGNS OF LIFE. IT'D BE A SHAME TO HAVE COME THIS FAR AND END UP WITHOUT ANY ANSWERS.

THE SEARCH HAS BECOME TOO PERSONAL TO GO UNRESOLVED.



SO...
WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

HE MIGHT
BE DEAD.

I'M NOT
FINDING A
PULSE.

I'LL
TRY SOME
C.P.R.



THE MASK IS DRAWN
BACK, REVEALING
WHAT'S LEFT OF THE
MAN CALLED
AL SIMMONS.



JEEZUS!!

WHAT THE HELL
HAPPENED
TO HIM?!

MY
GOD.

IT LOOKS LIKE
SOMEONE BURNED HIS
FACE OFF. GOD... WHAT'S
THIS GUY *BEEN*
THROUGH?

IF WHAT
HE SAID WAS
TRUE,* A WHOLE
LOT.

THE ONLY
OTHER THING
WE'VE GOT IS
THAT THE BAG
LADY CALLED
HIM "AL."

* LAST ISSUE -- Tom.

AL?

"AL"... THE RE-
ANIMATED DEAD
MAN... HAS BEEN
HUNTED AS A
VIGILANTE AND
A MURDERER.
AS A SPAWN OF
HELL, HE IS LESS
THAN THAT--
AND MORE.

TERRY FITZGERALD
ROLLS OVER. THE
DETECTIVES
ASSUME HE'S A
BUSINESSMAN. IN
FACT, HE WORKS
AS A LINGUIST
FOR THE C.I.A.

AL?

THE DETECTIVES HAD BEEN SO ENGROSSSED WITH
SPAWN THEY'D MOMENTARILY FORGOTTEN ABOUT HIM.

SO! YOU'RE ALIVE,
BUD! GOOD--
'CAUSE I'VE GOT
ABOUT TWO HUNDRED
QUESTIONS I NEED
ANSWERED.

URK!

... LIKE, WHAT IS
GOING ON
HERE?!

AFTER A FEW MINUTES A PATROL
CAR HAPPENS UPON THE SCENE.
BURKE THEN RADIOS INTO THE
NEAREST PRECINCT.

I'LL NEED
A COUPLE
AMBULANCES
AND A FEW OF
YOUR BOYS TO
CORDON OFF
THIS AREA.

ALSO...

BOYS, WE
JUST GOT
LUCKY.

A COUPLE DETECTIVES FROM
DOWNTOWN SAY THEY'VE GOT
THAT FITZGERALD GUY, AND THEY
DON'T SEEM TO KNOW ANY-
THING ABOUT HIM MURDER-
ING THOSE *FEDS*.*

I'LL PHONE
LOU AT THE
AGENCY--TELL
HIM TO PASS
THE WORD.

GET FOUR UNITS
DOWN THERE. I'M
GOING TO STEAL THIS
COLLAR OUT FROM
UNDER THEIR
NOSES.

CLICK

-- GET ME
EVERYTHING YOU
HAVE ON A *FITZGERALD*,
TERENCE D. HE SAYS
HE'S WITH THE *C.I.A.*,
THOUGH HE AIN'T GOT
A WALLET TO
PROVE IT.

THANKS.

IT'LL BE
A PLEASURE
TO FINALLY
NAIL THAT
TRAITOR.

* ISSUE 22 -- *Toms*.

NOT LONG
AFTER, AT
THE OMNI-
INTELLIGENCE
AGENCY, THE
UNITED
STATES
SECURITY
GROUP...

YOU WANTED
TO SEE US,
MR. WYNN?

THEY'VE FOUND
FITZGERALD, DOWN NEAR
PENN STATION. I WANT
OUR PEOPLE DOWN
THERE NOW.

ONCE THERE,
PULL RANK.

HE'S
OURS!

THIS TIME
I'M GOING TO
FRY THAT
SONUVABITCH.

YOU MAKE SURE THAT AREA IS
SO TIGHT THAT THE *WIND*
CAN'T EVEN GET OUT.

I WON'T
LOSE HIM
AGAIN.

JASON WYNN HAS
BECOME CONSUMED
WITH THIS CASE.

HIS FAUX PAS OVER
TERRY FITZGERALD
THREATENS HIS
CAREER.

AND... IF HE SO
MUCH AS LOOKS AT YOU
CROSSEYED, MAKE SURE
HIS **DEATH** LOOKS
LIKE AN ACCIDENT.

DO YOU
READ
ME?

PERFECTLY,
SIR.

ANYTHING
ELSE?

JUST
DO IT.

HE KNOWS
FITZGERALD IS NO
TRAITOR, BUT
CIRCUMSTANCES MADE
HIM THE LOGICAL
SUSPECT. RATHER THAN
ADMIT HIS ERROR, WYNN
CONTINUES TO CONDUCT
A BRUTAL INVESTIGATION.

POLICE, F.B.I. ... ALL ARE
CALLED INTO PLAY.

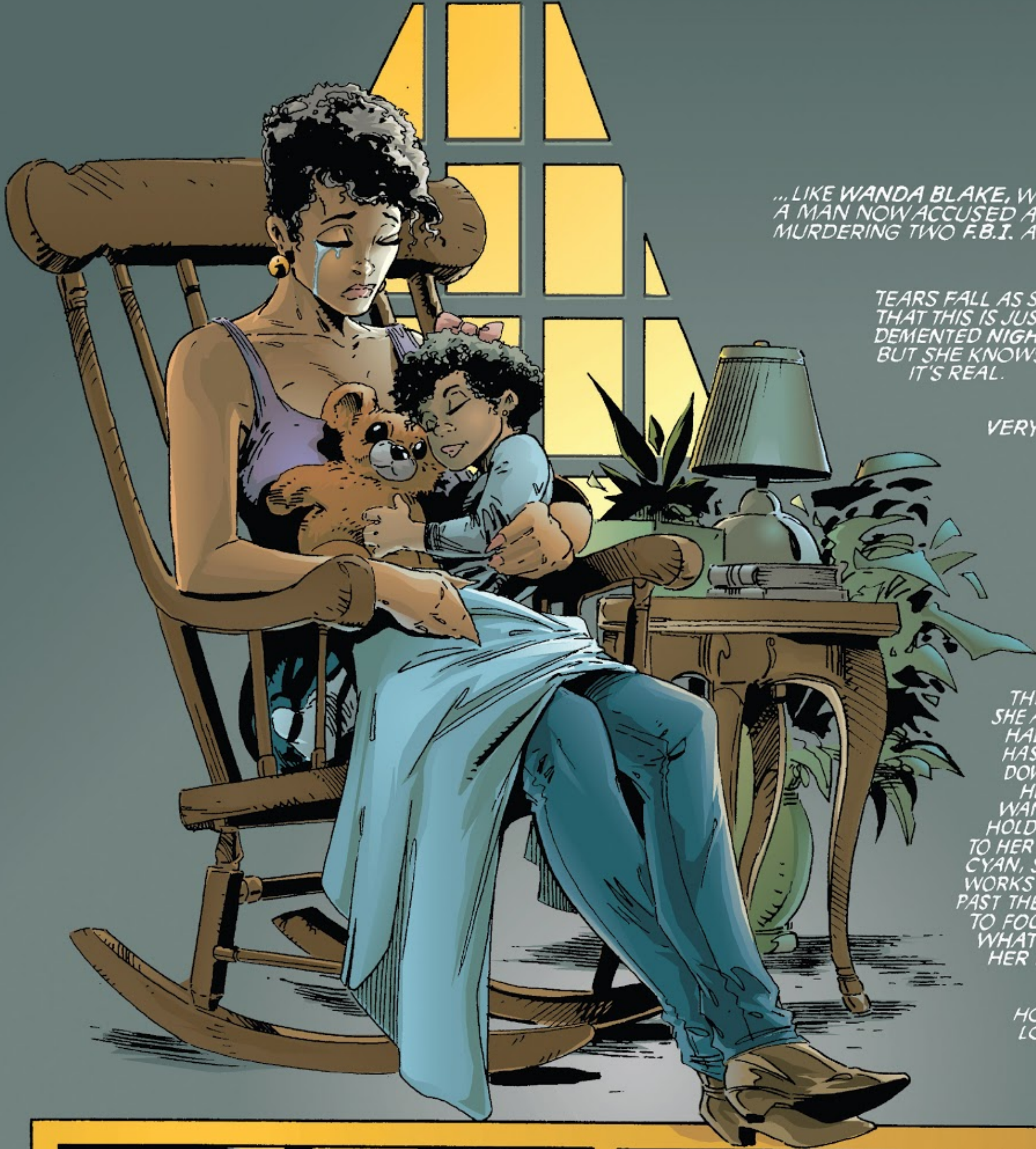
WYNN'S CALLOUSNESS
IS A BYPRODUCT OF
YEARS OF UNQUES-
TIONED AUTHORITY.

AS SUPREME DIRECTOR
OF U.S. INTELLIGENCE
AGENCIES, HE HAS
SINGLE-HANDEDLY
ENDED WARS... EVEN
SOME HE BEGAN.

TERRY FITZGERALD
IS ONLY ONE MAN.
HIS LIFE MEANS
NOTHING TO A
DICTATOR WHOSE
EFFECTIVENESS IS
BEING QUESTIONED.

A QUICK RESOLUTION
TO THIS FIASCO WILL
RESTORE HIS PREEMI-
NANCE WITH THE
WHITE HOUSE, AND
IN THE GLOBAL
COMMUNITY...

...WHILE LEAVING IT TO
OTHERS TO DEAL
WITH ITS AFTERMATH...



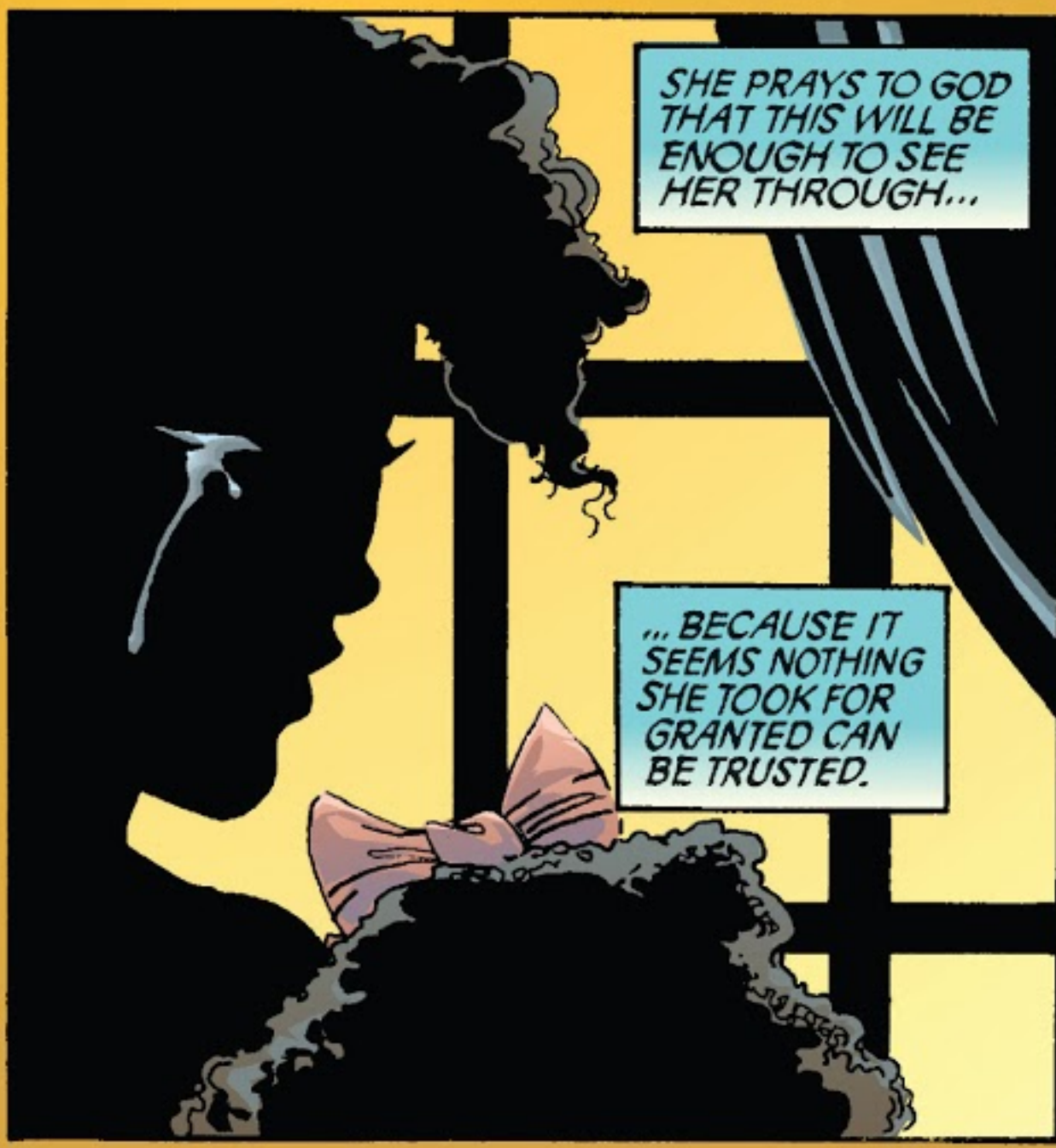
...LIKE WANDA BLAKE, WIFE OF
A MAN NOW ACCUSED ALSO OF
MURDERING TWO F.B.I. AGENTS.

TEARS FALL AS SHE PRAYS
THAT THIS IS JUST SOME
DEMENTED NIGHTMARE...
BUT SHE KNOWS THAT
IT'S REAL.

VERY REAL.

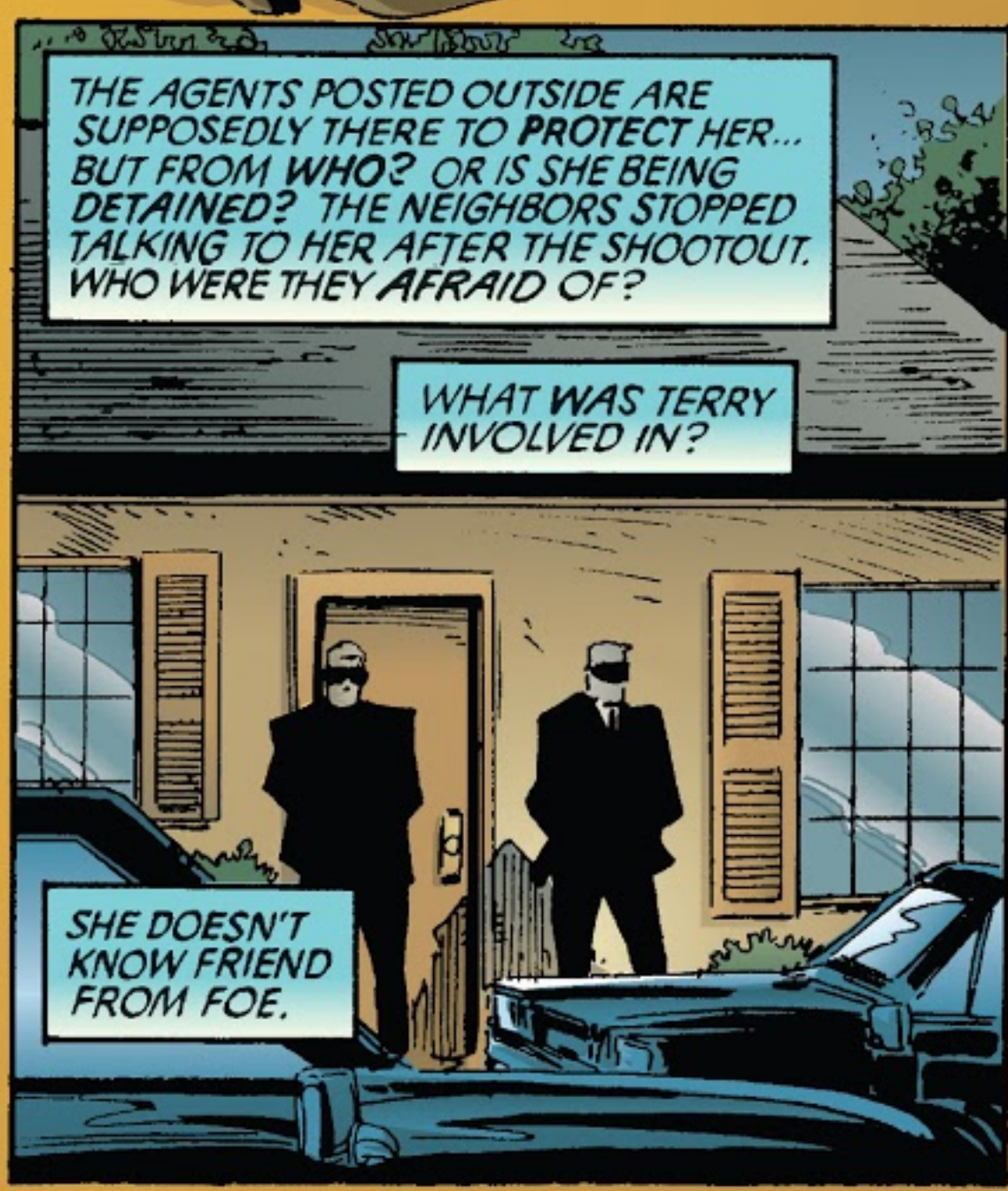
THE LIFE
SHE AND TERRY
HAD BUILT
HAS CRASHED
DOWN AROUND
HER. AS
WANDA NOW
HOLDS TIGHT
TO HER DAUGHTER
CYAN, SHE
WORKS TO PUSH
PAST THE SHOCK...
TO FOCUS ON
WHAT'S IN
HER HEART:

HOPE.
LOVE.



SHE PRAYS TO GOD
THAT THIS WILL BE
ENOUGH TO SEE
HER THROUGH...

... BECAUSE IT
SEEMS NOTHING
SHE TOOK FOR
GRANTED CAN
BE TRUSTED.



THE AGENTS POSTED OUTSIDE ARE
SUPPOSEDLY THERE TO PROTECT HER...
BUT FROM WHO? OR IS SHE BEING
DETAINED? THE NEIGHBORS STOPPED
TALKING TO HER AFTER THE SHOOTOUT.
WHO WERE THEY AFRAID OF?

WHAT WAS TERRY
INVOLVED IN?

SHE DOESN'T
KNOW FRIEND
FROM FOE.



...THE MIND OF A DEAD, C.I.A.-TRAINED ASSASSIN.

FACED WITH ODD SITUATIONS, SPAWN DID WHAT HAD TO BE DONE. UNFORTUNATELY, THE FALLOUT FROM HIS ACTIONS HAS LANDED SQUARELY ON THE SHOULDERS OF HIS BEST FRIEND OF A LIFETIME AGO.

YOU JUST SETTLE DOWN, BUDDY. THE OTHER COPS WILL BE HERE SOON.

BELIEVE US, TERRY, WE'RE JUST AS ANXIOUS TO FIGURE THIS OUT AS YOU ARE.

YOU GUYS HAVE TO BELIEVE ME... I **DON'T** HAVE TIME!

THE MAFIA'S GOT MY WIFE AND KID!!

I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE!

NOW!

LISTEN, PAL!

I DON'T CARE WHAT YOUR PROBLEM IS. YOU AIN'T GOING NOWHERE.

UNDER-
STAND?!

PLEASE, SIR, TAKE IT EASY.

BACK OFF, TWITCH! THIS ONE'S BEEN DOGGING ME TOO LONG FOR ME TO LET IT FALL APART NOW!

ARE YOU **DEAF?!** DIDN'T YOU HEAR WHAT I SAID-- IT'S THE MOB, YOU IDIOT!! THEY'LL KILL THEM!

Oh, NO. NOT AGAIN...!

FREEZE!

THEY'VE GOT MY WIFE AND LITTLE GIRL! *

WANDA...?

* IT WAS ACTUALLY JUST A BLUFF. SEE ISSUE 22 -- Tom.

IN THE SPRAWLING OFFICE OF NEW YORK MAFIA CHIEF VITO GRAVANO TENSIONS ARE RUNNING HIGH. THOUGH HE LIVED THROUGH HIS ORDEAL WITH THE VIOLATOR AND HIS BROTHER DEMONS*, IT ENDED FAR FROM SATISFACTORILY.

AND NOW THE HEAT'S BEEN TURNED UP. TWO OF HIS BOYS, TAKEN BY SURPRISE, SHOT AND KILLED A PAIR OF FEDERAL AGENTS ON THE FRONT LAWN OF TERRY FITZGERALD'S HOUSE.

OUT OF RESPECT FOR EACH OTHERS' INFLUENCE, THE TWO GROUPS HAVE LONG HAD A "SPECIAL" WORKING RELATIONSHIP. VITO IS LUCKY THAT EVERYONE IS STILL BLAMING FITZGERALD.

HE CAN THANK JASON WYNN FOR THAT.

I SENT FRANKIE AND TOMMY BACK TO THE MURDER SCENE.

THEY'RE MAKING SURE WE STAY CLEAN THROUGH ALL THIS.

AND US?

I WANT YOU TO MAKE SURE OVERTKILL DID HIS JOB. I NEED FITZGERALD DEAD. THE CARTEL HAS BEEN--

RING
RING
RING
RING

* VIOLATOR MINI-SERIES. - Tom.

YES?

THIS IS GINO. WE'VE JUST CALLED A MEETING FOR NEXT THURSDAY. SOME OF THE MEMBERS HAVE REQUESTED A PROGRESS REPORT. THERE'S BEEN UNHAPPINESS WITH YOUR RECENT DEALINGS.

YOU'VE GOT SIX DAYS TO CORRECT THIS, UNDERSTAND?

WE'RE COUNTING ON YOU, VITO.

CLICK

PERFECT!!

GRAVANO IS NOT USED TO BEING ON THE RECEIVING END OF THREATS.

NOR WILL HE ALLOW IT TO CONTINUE.

SLAM!



SEND SOMEONE
OVER TO GINO'S
RESTAURANT. TAKE HIS
TOP CHEF AND SLICE OFF
HIS HANDS.

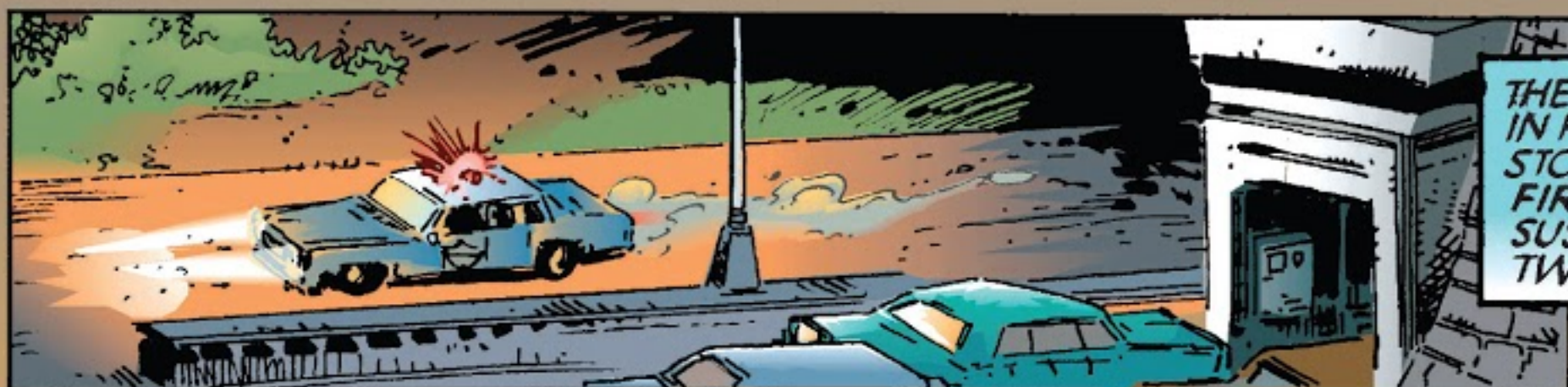
GINO NEEDS
TO UNDERSTAND
WHO RUNS
THIS SHOW.

IN THE
MEANTIME, I
WANT FITZGERALD'S
BODY. TELL OVERTKILL
TO LEAVE ENOUGH OF
IT INTACT FOR ME TO
TAKE TO MY MEETING
ON THURSDAY.

THAT SHOULD SHUT THEM UP.



UNFORTUNATELY FOR
TWIST, THAT MAYNOT
BE AS EASY AS IT
SEEMS. RIGHT NOW,
FITZGERALD IS A VERY
HOT COMMODITY.

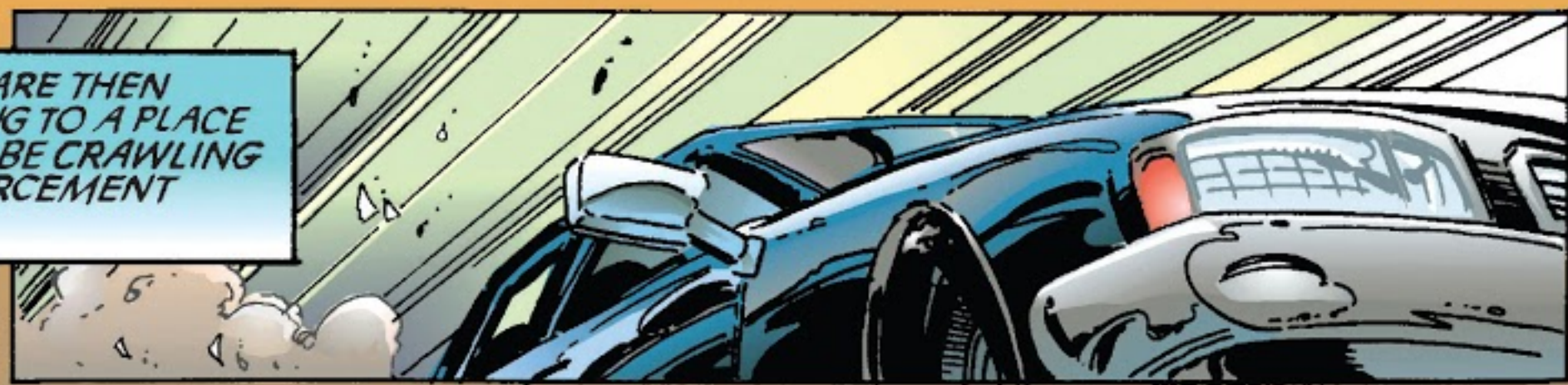


THE POLICE BELIEVE HE'S
IN POSSESSION OF
STOLEN EXPERIMENTAL
FIREARMS. THE F.B.I.
SUSPECT HIM OF KILLING
TWO OF THEIR AGENTS.



THE C.I.A. IS
PRODDING THESE
DOMESTIC AGENCIES
AT WYNN'S
"REQUEST."

TWIST'S GOONS ARE THEN
RACING HEADLONG TO A PLACE
THAT WILL SOON BE CRAWLING
WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT
OFFICERS.



ADDING TO THE FRAY WILL BE
EVERY LOCAL MEDIA CREW
THAT'S BEEN MONITORING THE
POLICE BANDS.

THIS IS NOT GOING TO BE
THE EASIEST TIME TO BE
TERRY FITZGERALD.



THOUGH DETECTIVE SAM BURKE HAS HAD A VERY SUCCESSFUL CAREER, ONE POINT CANNOT BE DENIED: HE'S AN OVERWEIGHT SLOB.

FOR HIM, "PURSUING A SUSPECT ON FOOT" IS A CONTRADICTION IN TERMS. THAT'S WHY HE WAS TEAMED WITH SCRAWNY "TWITCH" WILLIAMS...

...TO WHOM IT FALLS (YET AGAIN) TO CATCH UP WITH A FLEEING PERPETRATOR (ALLEGED).

puff<
puff<

PRECINCT BY PRECINCT, THE QUESTION HAS BEEN ASKED, "WHY DO THEY CALL HIM 'TWITCH'?"

puff<

THE ANSWER:

"BECAUSE HE *DOESN'T*!"

IT'S OVER, TERRY.

ACCEPT IT.

TERRY SLUMPS TO THE GROUND, A BROKEN MAN. PUTTING HIS HEAD INTO HIS HANDS, HE BEGINS TO SOB. HE DOESN'T KNOW WHY ANY OF THIS IS HAPPENING. THINGS ARE SO OUT OF WHACK.

BUT EVEN MORE IMPORTANTLY, HE HAS FAILED HIS WIFE AND CHILD. THAT IS MORE THAN HE CAN BEAR.

WANDA, PLEASE FORGIVE ME.

YOU >huff< GOT 'IM! GREAT... WORK...! >huff-ff<

I... THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO HAVE >huff< A HEART... ATTACK...

GOOD FOR YOU, SIR.



I'M GETTING
SICK AND
TIRED OF THIS!!
WE'RE GOING
BACK TO YOUR
DEAD HERO BUDDY.
I'LL BRING THE
LOCAL COPS UP TO
DATE, THEN I'M
TAKING YOU IN
TO THE STATION
DOWNTOWN.

IF YOU
SO MUCH
AS FLINCH, I'LL
SHOOT YOU
MYSELF.

THERE
THEY ARE.



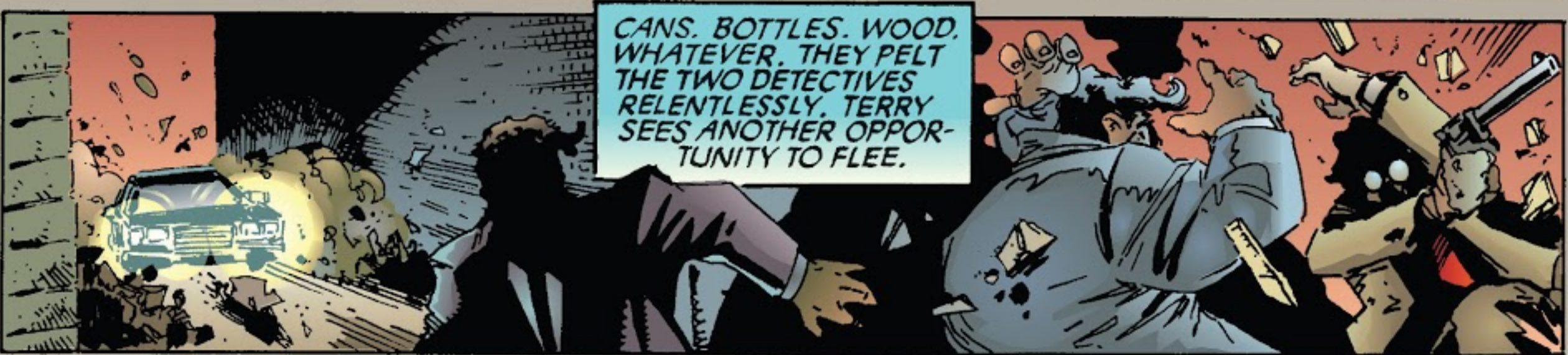
HEY!

KUNK!



GET OUT OF HERE!
GET OUT OF OUR ALLEY!
OUT OF OUR ALLEY!

THEY STAND POISED IN THE
MOONLIGHT, READY TO TAKE
BACK WHAT IS THEIRS-- READY
TO DEFEND THEIR FALLEN
KING: SPAWN.

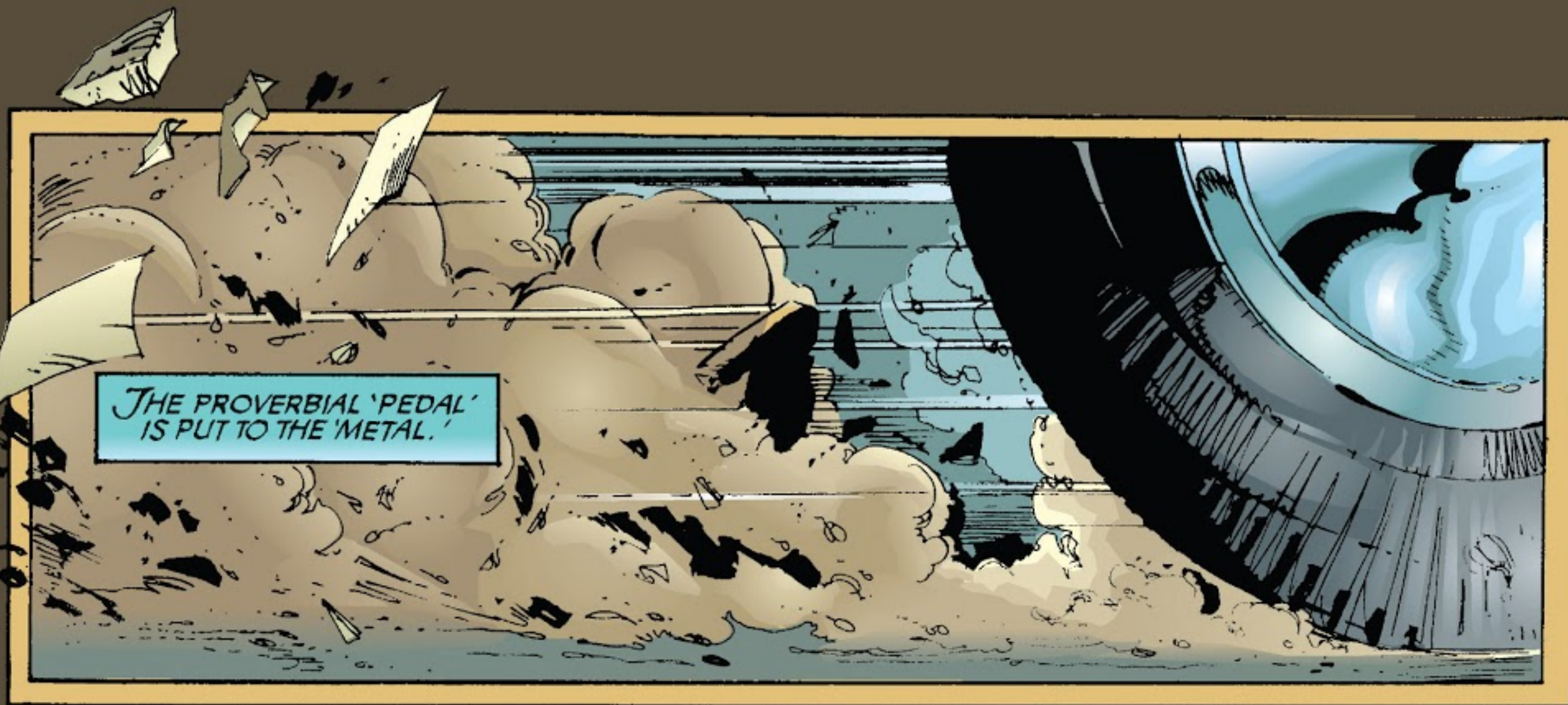


CANS. BOTTLES. WOOD.
WHATEVER. THEY PELT
THE TWO DETECTIVES
RELENTLESSLY. TERRY
SEES ANOTHER OPPOR-
TUNITY TO FLEE.



NOW DISTANCED FROM
THE POLICE, HE'S SPOTTED
BY THE FIRST GROUP ON
THE SCENE-- THE C.I.A.

SAY
GOODNIGHT,
TRAITOR.



THE PROVERBIAL 'PEDAL'
IS PUT TO THE 'METAL.'



SIR,
WE NEED
TO FALL
BACK!

I KNOW!
I KNOW!

YOU GRAB
FITZY! I'LL
COVER YOU!

EVERYONE'S
GOING
CRAZY
TONIGHT!



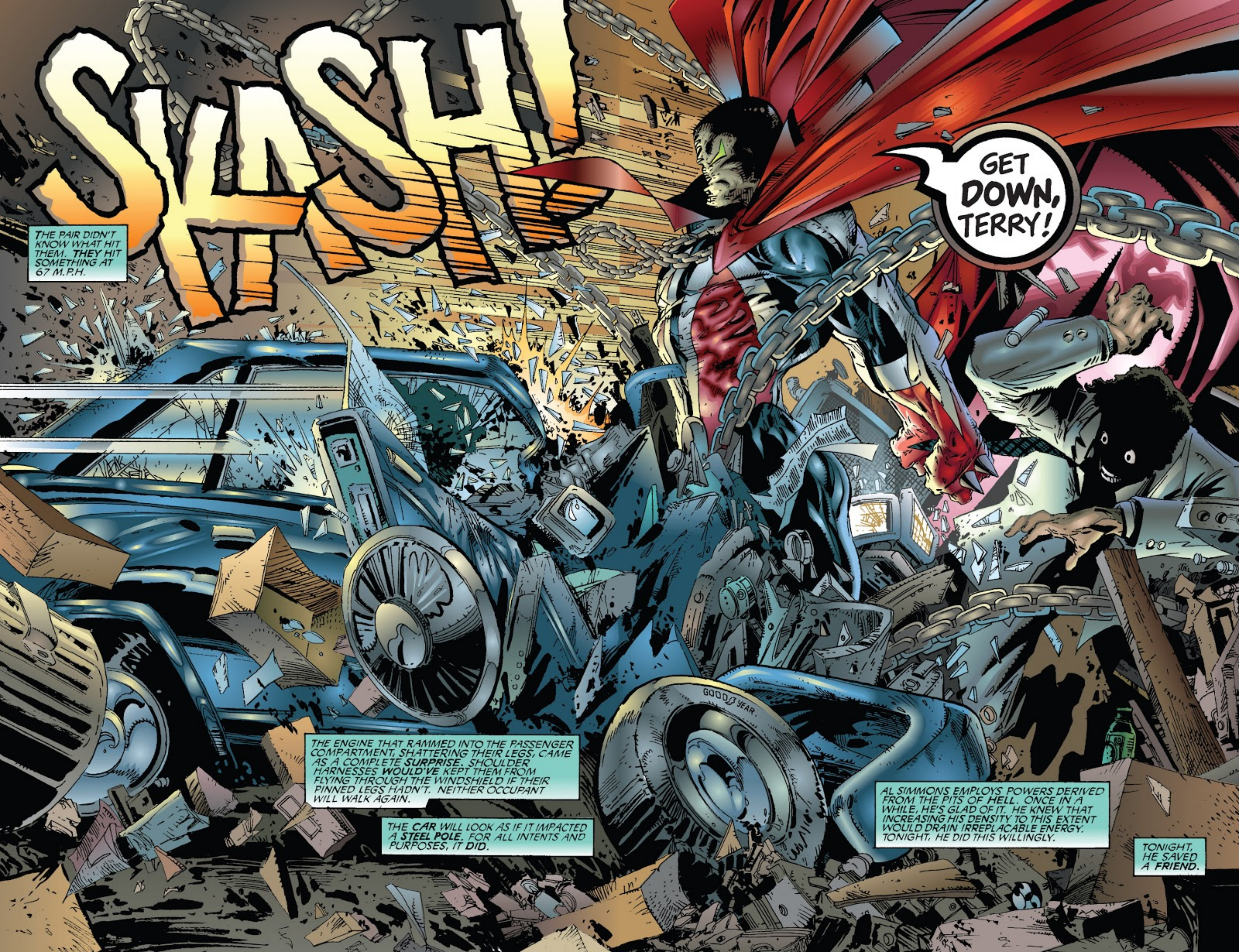
TERRY TURNS TO RUN.

TOO LATE.



HE STANDS
FROZEN, STARING
AT THE HEAD-
LIGHTS LIKE SOME
WILD ANIMAL ON
THE HIGHWAY.

HE KNOWS HIS LUCK
HAS FINALLY RUN OUT.



THE PAIR DIDN'T KNOW WHAT HIT THEM. THEY HIT SOMETHING AT 67 M.P.H.

GET
DOWN,
TERRY!

THE ENGINE THAT RAMMED INTO THE PASSENGER COMPARTMENT, SHATTERING THEIR LEGS, CAME AS A COMPLETE SURPRISE. SHOULDER HARNESSES WOULD'VE KEPT THEM FROM FLYING THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD IF THEIR PINNED LEGS HADN'T. NEITHER OCCUPANT WILL WALK AGAIN.

THE CAR WILL LOOK AS IF IT IMPACTED A STEEL POLE. FOR ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES, IT DID.

AL SIMMONS EMPLOYS POWERS DERIVED FROM THE PITS OF HELL. ONCE IN A WHILE, HE'S GLAD OF IT. HE KNEW THAT INCREASING HIS DENSITY TO THIS EXTENT WOULD DRAIN IRREPLACABLE ENERGY. TONIGHT, HE DID THIS WILLINGLY.

TONIGHT,
HE SAVED
A FRIEND.

AS THE HORDE CONVERGES UPON HIM, SPAWN STANDS AND STARES. HIS C.I.A. BACKGROUND INFORMS HIS DECISIONS: WHEN TO REACT, AND HOW. HE HAS SEVERAL TARGETS TONIGHT. ONE PURPOSE.

UNTIL NOW, HE TRIED HIDING HIMSELF FROM THE PUBLIC.

THAT HASN'T WORKED VERY WELL.

FEAR.

IT CAN BE BROUGHT ON IN MANY WAYS: IRRATIONAL THOUGHT. PARANOIA. SUPERSTITION.

HE'S BEEN GIVEN A NAME BY THE VIOLATOR. IT'S TIME THEY LEARNED IT...

IT CAN ALSO BE INSTITUTED BY EXAMPLE.

HE NEEDS A NEW TACTIC:

... AS WELL AS SOMETHING ELSE:

THESE ALLEYS BELONG TO SPAWN

CRIPES. WHAT A NIGHT.

... THAT THE BOOGIE MAN REALLY DOES EXIST.

WHERE'D HE GO?

HE'S GOING TO MAKE SURE EVERYONE GETS THAT MESSAGE.

WITH VARIOUS FILES TAKEN FROM TONY TWIST'S OFFICE, SPAWN HAD BEGUN TO PIECE THINGS TOGETHER. EACH NEW AGENCY DROPPING INTO THE MIX WAS TARGETED AS ANOTHER PLACE FOR AL TO CROSS-CHECK HIS DATA.

FINALLY, ALL THAT REMAINED WAS TO ACT AS COURIER.



I'VE ALWAYS BEEN AMAZED HOW RELAXED YOU ARE ABOUT DESTROYING PEOPLE.

uh?

SHUT UP.

I'VE SOMETHING TO SAY.

YOU CALL YOUR DOGS OFF THE FITZGERALD CASE. THEN YOU BACKTRACK OVER THAT TWISTED TRAIL OF LIES YOU'VE LAID AND SOMEHOW YOU CORRECT IT. I WANT TERRY FITZGERALD TO BE SO SQUEAKY CLEAN THEY'LL WANT TO GIVE HIM A MEDAL. IN THE FUTURE, YOU AND YOUR PEOPLE WILL STAY AWAY FROM HIM AND HIS FAMILY.

IN CASE I HAVEN'T MADE MY POINT, I THOUGHT I'D LEAVE YOU WITH A COPY OF A SPECIAL FILE.

YOU'LL FIND THAT YOUR CAREER OF WEALTH AND POWER WILL VANISH IF ANYONE READS IT. THE PRESIDENT AND THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF WOULD BE THE FIRST.

I KNOW WHAT MAKES YOU TICK, JASON...

WHA...? HOW'D YOU...!



...AND THAT'S POWER.

THIS FILE CAN MAKE IT DISAPPEAR IN A HEARTBEAT.

JASON WYNN SCANS THE FILE. NO ONE ALIVE KNEW SOME OF THE ITEMS IT CONTAINS.





mmm...
SAUERKRAUT...
SWISS CHEESE...
oh! oh! oh!
PICKLED
HERRING!

IT'S 4:33 a.m.
SAM BURKE
HAS FINALLY
ARRIVED IN
HIS APART-
MENT...

BURKE...

CRIPES!

WHAT
KINDA
GHOST FREAK
ARE YOU?!!

I NEED YOU TO PASS
A MESSAGE ALONG TO CHIEF
BANKS. TELL HIM TO DROP
THE FITZGERALD CASE...

... AND TO
LEAVE MY ALLEY
ALONE.

IF HE DOESN'T,
I'LL MAKE SURE
EVERY CRIMINAL IN
A TEN BLOCK RADIUS
TURNS LEFT EVERY
TIME A COP GOES
RIGHT.

YOU'LL
BE SO BUSY
CHASING THE MOB
I'LL BECOME A
DISTANT
MEMORY.

AND
DO ME A
FAVOR...

... GIVE
THIS FILE
TO CHIEF
BANKS.

KRAFT
SINGLES

I'D HATE
TO SEE WHAT
THE MEDIA WOULD
MAKE OF HIS
RANGE OF 'EXTRA-
CURRICULAR
ACTIVITIES.'

IF HE'S
SMART, I
WON'T HAVE
TO DISTRIBUTE
COPIES.

CRIPES.

BANKS

SENSITIVE

VITO GRAVANO SITS SWEATING IN HIS PRIVATE SAUNA. HE FINDS IT THERAPEUTIC TO OUTLINE HIS ONGOING ACTIVITIES IN SUCH HEAT.

HEY,
FAT MAN.

LET'S
CHAT.

DEAR
GOD
ABOVE.

YOU WILL
CEASE AND DESIST
IN YOUR IDIOTIC
HOUNDING OF TERRY
FITZGERALD. **NOW.**
YOUR RATS HAVE GIVEN
YOU BAD
INFORMATION.
HE'S HUMAN.

I'M
NOT.

AND JUST
TO MAKE YOUR
DAY, HERE'S A FILE I
BORROWED FROM
YOUR OFFICE. I SEE IT
LAYS OUT YOUR
ORGANIZATION'S
OBJECTIVES FOR
THE NEXT SIX
MONTHS.

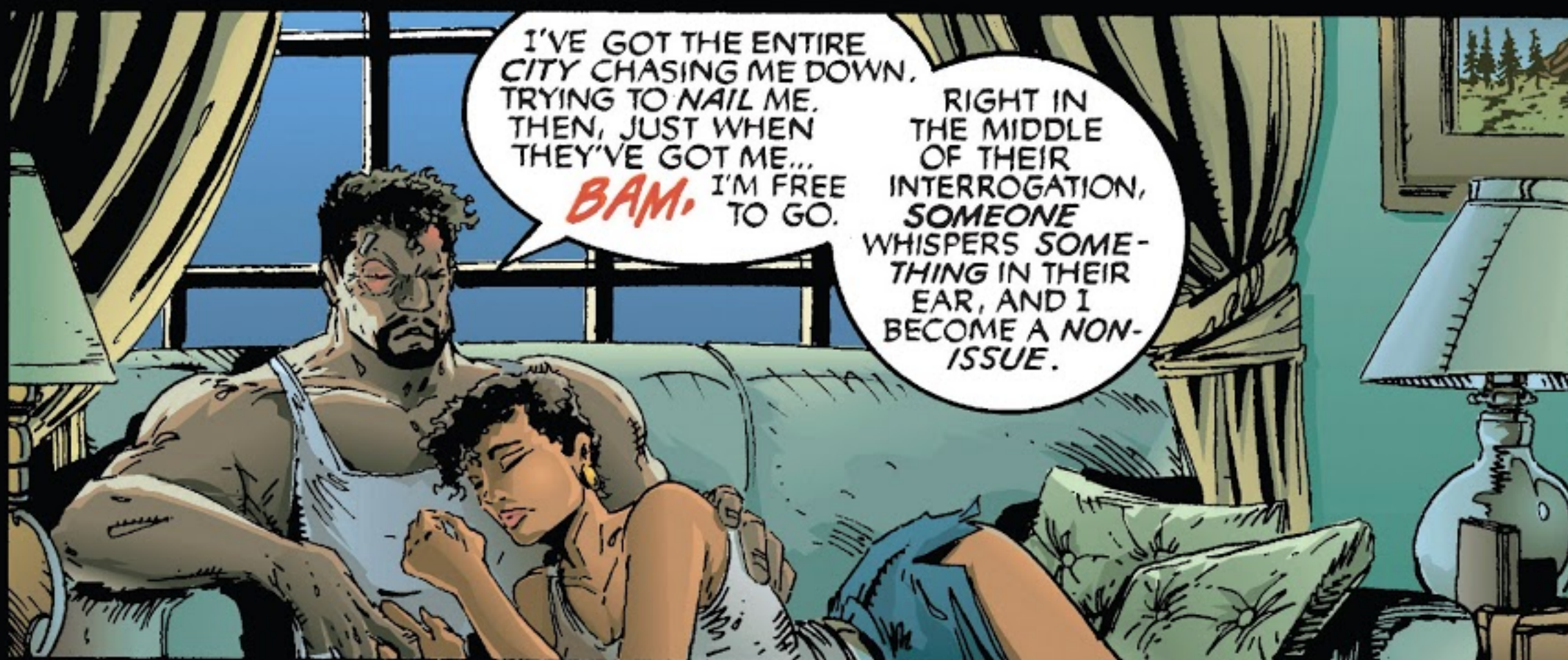
UNLESS
YOU WANT THE
COPS CRAWLING
UP YOUR REAR
YOU'LL LEAVE
FITZGERALD
ALONE.

oh...
AND STAY
THE HELL
OUT OF MY
ALLEYS.

AT THE HOME OF TERRY FITZGERALD AND HIS WIFE, WANDA BLAKE, THE EFFECTS OF SPAWN'S CRYPTIC VISITS ARE DISCUSSED IN HUSHED TONES.

IT JUST DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE TO ME.

NONE OF THIS.



I'VE GOT THE ENTIRE CITY CHASING ME DOWN, TRYING TO NAIL ME. THEN, JUST WHEN THEY'VE GOT ME... **BAM.** I'M FREE TO GO.

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF THEIR INTERROGATION, SOMEONE WHISPERS SOMETHING IN THEIR EAR, AND I BECOME A NON-ISSUE.



HONEY, I DON'T PRETEND TO KNOW WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT, BUT IT SCARED ME. ALL I COULD THINK OF WAS LOSING YOU, OF CYAN NOT HAVING A DADDY, OF YOU NOT SEEING HER GROW UP.

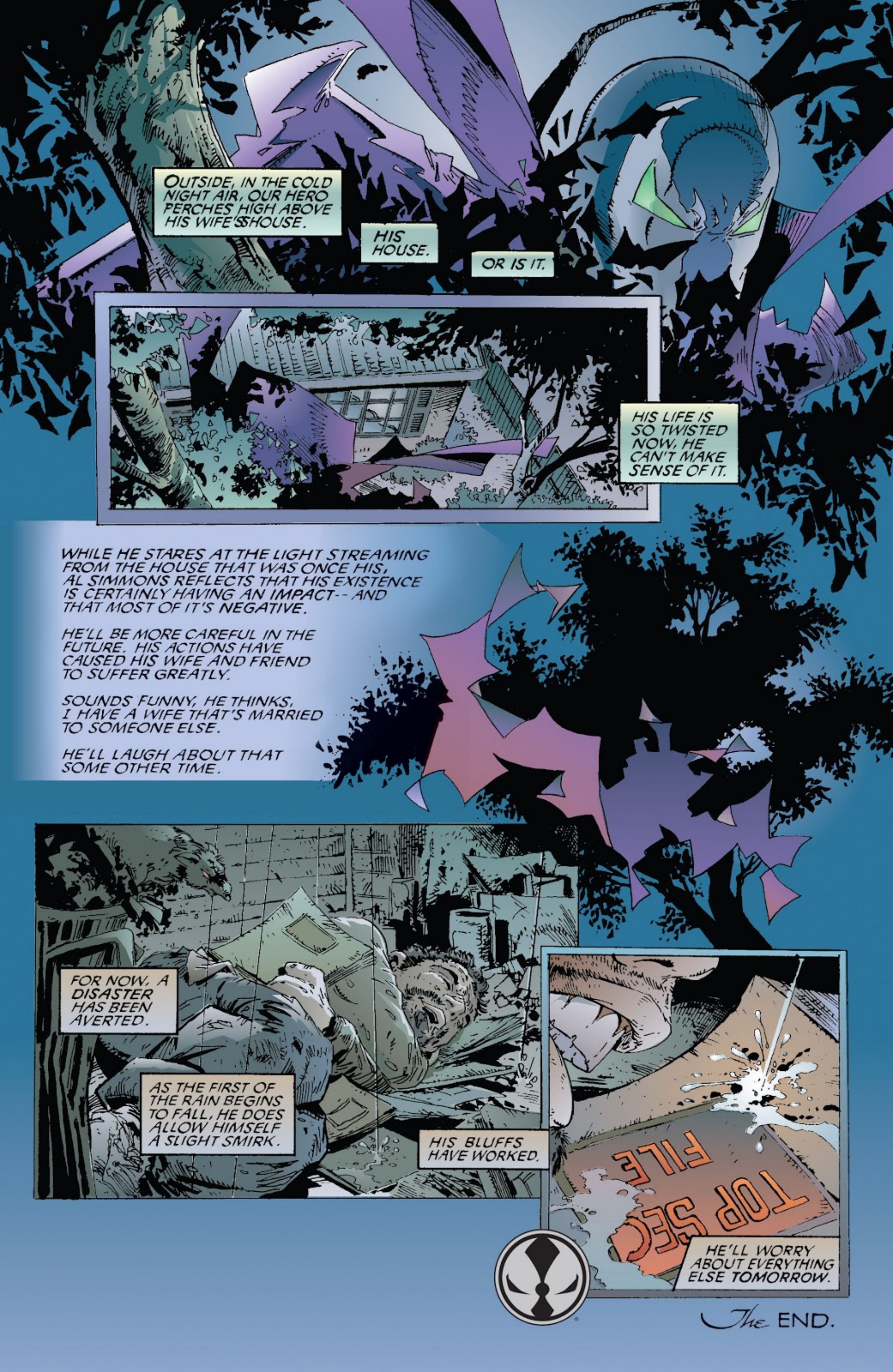
I COULDN'T BEAR THAT.



I WAS SCARED, TOO, SWEETHEART. I STILL AM.

SOMEONE MESSSED WITH OUR LIVES. THEN, JUST LIKE THAT, IT'S ALL CALLED OFF. IT TAKES AN **AWFUL** LOT OF INFLUENCE TO DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

THAT SCARES ME.



OUTSIDE, IN THE COLD
NIGHT AIR, OUR HERO
PERCHES HIGH ABOVE
HIS WIFE'S HOUSE.

HIS
HOUSE.

OR IS IT.



HIS LIFE IS
SO TWISTED
NOW, HE
CAN'T MAKE
SENSE OF IT.

WHILE HE STARES AT THE LIGHT STREAMING
FROM THE HOUSE THAT WAS ONCE HIS,
AL SIMMONS REFLECTS THAT HIS EXISTENCE
IS CERTAINLY HAVING AN IMPACT-- AND
THAT MOST OF IT'S NEGATIVE.

HE'LL BE MORE CAREFUL IN THE
FUTURE. HIS ACTIONS HAVE
CAUSED HIS WIFE AND FRIEND
TO SUFFER GREATLY.

SOUNDS FUNNY, HE THINKS,
I HAVE A WIFE THAT'S MARRIED
TO SOMEONE ELSE.

HE'LL LAUGH ABOUT THAT
SOME OTHER TIME.



FOR NOW, A
DISASTER
HAS BEEN
AVERTED.

AS THE FIRST OF
THE RAIN BEGINS
TO FALL, HE DOES
ALLOW HIMSELF
A SLIGHT SMIRK.

HIS BLUFFS
HAVE WORKED.



HE'LL WORRY
ABOUT EVERYTHING
ELSE TOMORROW.



The END.



®

SPAWN

image

25
OCT

DIGITAL
EDITION



SILV
VES
TRI
BRIAN:
BATT



...AND POLICE IN QUEENS STILL HAVE NO COMMENT ON THE DEATHS THERE OF TWO F.B.I. AGENTS LAST WEEK.

IN NEW YORK'S BOWERY, MEANWHILE, THERE HAVE BEEN REPORTS OF GANG-RELATED COMBAT AGAINST A COSTUMED META-BEING. A MELEE INVOLVING POLICE DETECTIVES, A GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE, A TECHNO-AUGMENTED MERCENARY, AND THIS PREVIOUSLY UNKNOWN HERO WAS OBSERVED BY LOCAL NEWS CREWS. BIOLUMINESCENT GRAPHITTI WAS THEN DISCOVERED IDENTIFYING THE NEW-COMER AS "SPAWN." POLICE BELIEVE HE MAY BE LINKED WITH THE VIGILANTE MURDERS OF KNOWN CRIME LORDS SEVERAL MONTHS AGO.



WELL, WELL. IF IT ISN'T RATINGS WAR TIME IN THE BROADCAST NEWS INDUSTRY, WHAT TIME *IS* IT? NEW YORK CITY, HQ TO RADIO AND TELEVISION AND THE HOME OF BROADWAY, HAS NOW PREMIERED A PERFORMANCE OF ANOTHER KIND. THE BIG APPLE IS NOW PLAYING HOST TO THE MOST OUTLANDISH SCENES OF CARNAGE THIS SIDE OF BOSNIA--IF YOU BELIEVE THE NEWS FOLKS. WHAT DO YOU GET WHEN YOU MIX CYBORG WARRIORS, THE F.B.I., THE C.I.A. AND THE COPS-- *PLUS* A MAGICAL VIGILANTE--FIGHTING ALL OVER TOWN? *DOUBLE DIGIT NIELSENS!* AND THEY DISMISS *MY* CHANNEL AS LOWBROW INFOTAINMENT!



EITHER *HELL* HAS FROZEN OVER OR IT'S FINALLY *MY* TURN TO SEE SOME JUSTICE IN THIS WORLD. THERE'S NOW APPEARED A COSTUMED DO-GOODER *I* CAN BELIEVE IN. IF HE IS THE VIGILANTE--AND HE'S DEFINITELY SHOWING ENOUGH BRASS-- THEN *GOD BLESS* THIS SPAWN, WHO-EVER HE IS. WE'VE *NEEDED* SOMEONE TO STAND UP AND CLEAR OUR CITY OF ALL THE SMUG SELF-INTERESTED FILTH. MIX EQUAL DOSES OF MOB-BASHING AND GOVERNMENT-SMASHING AND YOU'VE GOT *MY KIND OF HERO*. SO, SPAWN, WHOEVER YOU ARE, *WHATEVER* YOU ARE, IF YOU CAN HEAR THIS...

"...I'M WITH YOU, BUDDY, ALL THE WAY!"

IN THE DANK RECESSES OF THE SPRAWLING CITY OF NEW YORK-- SPECIFICALLY, THE **BOWERY**-- THE NIGHT PEOPLE TEND TO THEIR RITUALS.

GATHERED AROUND A MAKESHIFT HEATER, THE SMALL GROUP OF DERELICTS ARE IN A RATHER FESTIVE MOOD. THEIR TERRITORY HAS BEEN UNMISTAKABLY **MARKED**.

THE TAGGING IDENTIFIES THEIR RESIDENT MESSIAH: **SPAWN**.

Y'KNOW, IT GETS MY GOAT THAT BROOKLYN LOST THE DODGERS.

DIDN'T MIND THEM STINKIN' GIANTS GOIN' TO 'FRISCO, THOUGH.

BUT THE DODGERS...
JEEZ! THAT
BROKE MY HEART.

GIVE IT A REST, WILBUR. IT'S BEEN OVER 35 YEARS. THE DODGERS **AIN'T** COMING BACK.

I BET YOU'RE STILL SORE ABOUT THE RED SOX SELLING BABE RUTH TO THE YANKEES, TOO.

NOW DON'T GET ME GOIN' ON **THAT** ONE!

HEY PAUL, YOU AIN'T LEAVING US, ARE YOU?

DON'T'CHA WORRY, WILBUR, I JUST HAD ME MY **FULL**, IS ALL.

TIME TO MAKE THE OLD **BLADDER GLADDER!**

I SWEAR-- HE PEEES MORE THAN A PREGNANT WOMAN.

YES, ALL IS RIGHT IN THE ALLEYS AGAIN. NO POLICE HARASSMENT. NO F.B.I. RUNNING AROUND LIKE HYPER-ACTIVE CHILDREN. NO ONE FROM THE OUTSIDE IS BOTHERING THESE OUTCASTS.

BURP!

THAT FELT GOOD.



HEY
GRANDPA!

A MOMENT
OF YOUR TIME,
PLEASE!

KHKK!



UNFORTUNATELY, THERE
ARE DISSENTING FACTIONS
ON THE INSIDE.

WE'VE BEEN
HEARING ABOUT WHAT
A **HOTSHOT** YOUR
SPAWNIE-GUY IS. SO
ME AND THE BOYS
WOULD LIKE TO **SHARE**
SOMETHING...

SNIKT

... HE'S
NOTHIN'!
Y'HEAR?!
NOTHIN'!

PAUL CATCHES SIGHT OF
THE RUSTY BLADE OUT OF
THE CORNER OF HIS EYE.
HE WETS HIMSELF ON THE
SPOT.



WE DON'T
NEED HIS HELP.
OUR BOSS CAN TAKE
CARE OF HIMSELF--
BIG TIME.

SO YOU TELL
YOUR LITTLE **HERO**
THAT IF IT'S A **TURF**
WAR HE'S LOOKING
FOR, THEN HE'S
PUSHING THE
WRONG GUYS.

SWAK!

UMPF!
↑

TELL HIM
TO MOVE BACK
15 BLOCKS.
AND IF HE
DON'T...

"... IT'S GONNA
GET **BLOODY!**"



ELSEWHERE:

IT'S ONLY HIS SECOND DAY BACK AT THE OFFICE, BUT **TERRY FITZGERALD** THINKS HE MIGHT BE RUSHING THINGS. HIS HANDS ARE STILL NOT COMPLETELY HEALED, NOR ARE HIS CRACKED RIBS. AS A MATTER OF FACT, ALMOST ANY MOVE HE MAKES HURTS, AS A RESULT OF HIS RECENT RUN-IN WITH NEARLY EVERY **POLICING ORGANIZATION** IN EXISTENCE. *

STILL, HE THOUGHT WORK MIGHT BE GOOD THERAPY WHILE HE SORTED OUT EVENTS OF THE PAST FEW WEEKS.

ONE MATTER FOR CONCERN: HE HAD BEEN THREATENED ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS BY THOSE WITHIN HIS OWN AGENCY. WOULD HIS RETURN TO THE OFFICE BE MET WITH RESISTANCE?

ADMIT IT, TERRY, THINGS ARE **WRONG**. EVERYONE'S ACTING LIKE NOTHING HAPPENED.

NO MURDERS.
NO MANHUNT.
NO COPS.
NOTHING.

ON THE OTHER HAND, PEOPLE WON'T LOOK ME IN THE **EYE**. SOMEBODY IS BREATHING DOWN ON THEM, HEAVY. IT'S GOING TO BE HARD TO GET ANY ANSWERS.

BUT I'VE GOT TO KNOW WHY ALL OF THIS HAPPENED. THEN I'LL--



HEY, GOOD LOOKIN'-- NEED SOME HELP?



WANDA!

WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING
HERE?

WHAT
I SHOULD
HAVE
DONE
A LONG
TIME
AGO.

WHAT
DO YOU
MEAN?

IT'S TIME I
PAID ATTENTION
TO WHAT YOU DO FOR
A LIVING. I WANT TO
KNOW WHAT YOU
REALLY DO.
AND **WHY**.

BUT I
THOUGHT...

I KNOW. I
WANTED TO
DISTANCE MYSELF AFTER
WHAT HAPPENED TO AL. I
GUESS I WAS HOPING THAT
MY IGNORANCE WOULD
PROTECT ME FROM ANOTHER
HEARTACHE. AL'S DEATH
TORE ME APART, BUT
YOU HELPED ME
THROUGH THAT.

YOU'LL
NEVER KNOW
HOW MUCH
THAT **MEANT**
TO ME.

SO I'D LIKE
TO HELP. PLEASE.
I KNOW YOU'RE GOING
THROUGH A LOT. THERE
ARE QUESTIONS I'VE
GOT ABOUT WHAT JUST
HAPPENED. I'D LIKE
TO SEE IF WE CAN'T
ANSWER A FEW
TOGETHER.

I LOVE
YOU,
WANDA.

I
KNOW
YOU
DO.

DRY, ROTTING BOARDS SHATTER AFTER A QUICK FORCEFUL KICK. THIS DENIZEN OF THE SHADOWLANDS IS ANXIOUS TO BRAG TO HIS LEADER. TELL HIM THAT HE'S DONE HIS DUTY.

AS A GRUNT IN 'CHARLIE' COMPANY IN VIETNAM, DAVID BREWI THRIVED. NOW, NEARLY TWO DECADES LATER, THE SHELL-SHOCKED VET CARRIES ON THE LIFESTYLE OF A WAR LONG OVER.

THERE YOU ARE.

I PROCEEDED INTO SECTOR 12, LIKE YOU SAID. INFORMED THE ENEMY OF OUR STATUS AND REQUESTED THEIR IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL.

I ALSO MADE THREATS AND SLAPPED HIM UP A BIT.

BOSS!
YOU IN
HERE?

THEY SEEM VERY LOYAL TO THEIR COMMANDER. HE'S OBVIOUSLY GIVEN THEM A FALSE SENSE OF SECURITY.

YOU'VE
DONE
WELL,
DAVID.



A FEW
MORE PIECES
OF THE PUZZLE,
AND I'LL HAVE
ALL I NEED.

THEN,
I'LL BE ABLE
TO BRING THAT
FAT PIG
GRAVANO
TO HIS
KNEES!

I'VE WAITED
LONG ENOUGH!
SOON... **VERY**
SOON... I'M GOING
TO NAIL THAT
MAFIA
SCUMBAG!

PLEASE,
BOSS.

DO YOU
HEAR
ME?!

NOT
OVERTKILL.

NOT
SPAWN.

NOT
GOD.

CRASH!



Gasp!

NOTHING'S
GOING TO
SAVE VITO!

TELL THE
BOYS THAT
AFTER THEY CLEAR
SPAWN AND HIS
GANG OFF MY TURF
I WANT A
MEETING WITH
THEIR SO-CALLED
HERO...

... 'CAUSE
HE HAS
SOMETHING I
NEED!

KRIK
SKUTTLE
KRIK
CRATTLE

SPAWN.

HE'S ACCEPTED THE NAME.
OUT OF NECESSITY.

HIS NEW TITLE IS, FOR THE FIRST TIME, PUBLIC
KNOWLEDGE. HE HAD TRIED TO AVOID CONTACT
WITH THE 'REAL' WORLD, INSTEAD BIDDING HIS TIME
IN THE SHADOWS OF MANHATTAN'S BACK STREETS.

THAT DIDN'T WORK.

ALL HE WANTED WAS TO SEE HIS
WIFE. TO RETURN TO HIS ONE
TRUE LOVE. INSTEAD, HE'S
BEEN HUNTED. A DEAD
MAN FROM HELL
DOES NOT PASS
UNNOTICED.

SO, INSTEAD OF
RECAPTURING HIS PAST
LIFE, HE'S MERELY BEEN
AVOIDING IT, LOOKING
TO SOLVE THE UNWANTED
SITUATIONS THAT HAVE
FOLLOWED HIM INTO
THE ALLEYS.

NOW, THAT HAS BACKFIRED.

HE BROUGHT UNDUE HARM TO HIS
WIFE THROUGH HIS OWN CARELESS
ACTIONS. RATHER THAN BEING
PROTECTED, SHE WAS ALMOST
KILLED.*

HE WON'T ALLOW THAT AGAIN.

*SEE RECENT
ISSUES--Tom.



SO HE VOWS TO
REFOCUS.

TO SORT OUT THIS
ABOMINABLE
EXCUSE FOR A
LIFE.

I WAS
A FOOL.

YET NOW, AS A
MESSIAH AMONG
THE FORGOTTEN,
HE'S BECOME A
BEACON OF HOPE
IN THEIR DARKEST
HOURS.

AL!
YOU'VE
GOTTA
HEAR
THIS!

NO, I
DON'T.

IT'S TIME
YOU LEARNED
TO SOLVE
YOUR OWN
PROBLEMS.

BUT,
YOU DON'T
UNDER-
STAND!

YES I
DO!!

YOU PEOPLE
HAVE
BECOME **LAZY!**
ALWAYS TURNING
TO ME FOR HELP.
WELL, I DON'T
HAVE THE
ANSWERS.

I CAN'T
SOLVE
ALL
YOUR
PROBLEMS.

I'VE GOT
A FEW OF
MY OWN.

DEAR
GOD, AL!
WE DIDN'T
ASK FOR THIS!
THEY WANT
YOU, NOT
US!

TELL
WHOEVER
IT IS I'M NOT
INTERESTED.

BUT
AL...

ENGULFED BY THE
DARKNESS, HE
LEAVES BEHIND AN
INNOCENT, SOON
TO BE A CANDIDATE
FOR THE **CROSSFIRE**.



ZIPPITY-
DO-DAH!

munch
munch
munch

ZIPPITY-
AAY!

MY,
AREN'T WE
IN A RATHER
FESTIVE
MOOD,
SIR.

YOU
BETCHA,
TWITCH!

AND
I CAN
SEE
WHY.

IT MUST BE
THE FACT THAT OUR
PRIME SUSPECT *ESCAPED*
FROM US. OR MAYBE IT'S
THAT OUR FELLOW OFFICERS
TRIED TO STEAL OUR CASE.
NO! NO! IT MUST BE THAT WE
HAVE **NO SOLID**
LEADS IN OUR SEARCH
FOR THIS 'SPAWN.'

AM I
GETTING
WARM,
SIR?

GOD, I
LOVE YOUR
SARCASM,
TWITCH.

NOPE, LI'L
BUDDY. IT'S THIS
FILE.* I'VE GOT
INFO ON THAT BUGGER
CHIEF BANKS THAT'LL
CRIPPLE HIM --

-- AND
THAT BRINGS
A WARM SPOT
TO MY HEART.

* LAST ISSUE -- Tom.



THE AIR BEGINS TO THICKEN AS THE EARLY MORNING HOURS PASS AWAY.

HE CAME HERE TO REST. TO THINK.

IN HIS FORMER LIFE HE FOUGHT AND KILLED FOR WHAT HE BELIEVED IN. BUT THAT WAS **ANOTHER AL SIMMONS**, HE TELLS HIMSELF.



HE IS NOW SOMETHING DIFFERENT. SOMETHING DARK AND FOUL AND DISGUSTING.

AS HE STARES DOWN AT SCATTERED GROUPS OF HOMELESS PEOPLE, HE KNOWS THAT HIS MOMENTS OF FEELING HUMAN HAVE BECOME RARE.



SO HE **MUST** SEIZE THOSE MOMENTS.

DEFEND HIS BELIEFS. ACT LIKE A MAN.



STAND AGAINST
THOSE WHO
WOULD OPPOSE
HIM.

IT'S A TURF WAR.
PLAIN AND SIMPLE.

ANSWERS TO
HIS INQUIRIES
COME EASILY.

TIME HE
MARKED HIS
TERRITORY.

YOU
WANTED
TO
TALK?

NOT
EXACTLY!

KSHH!

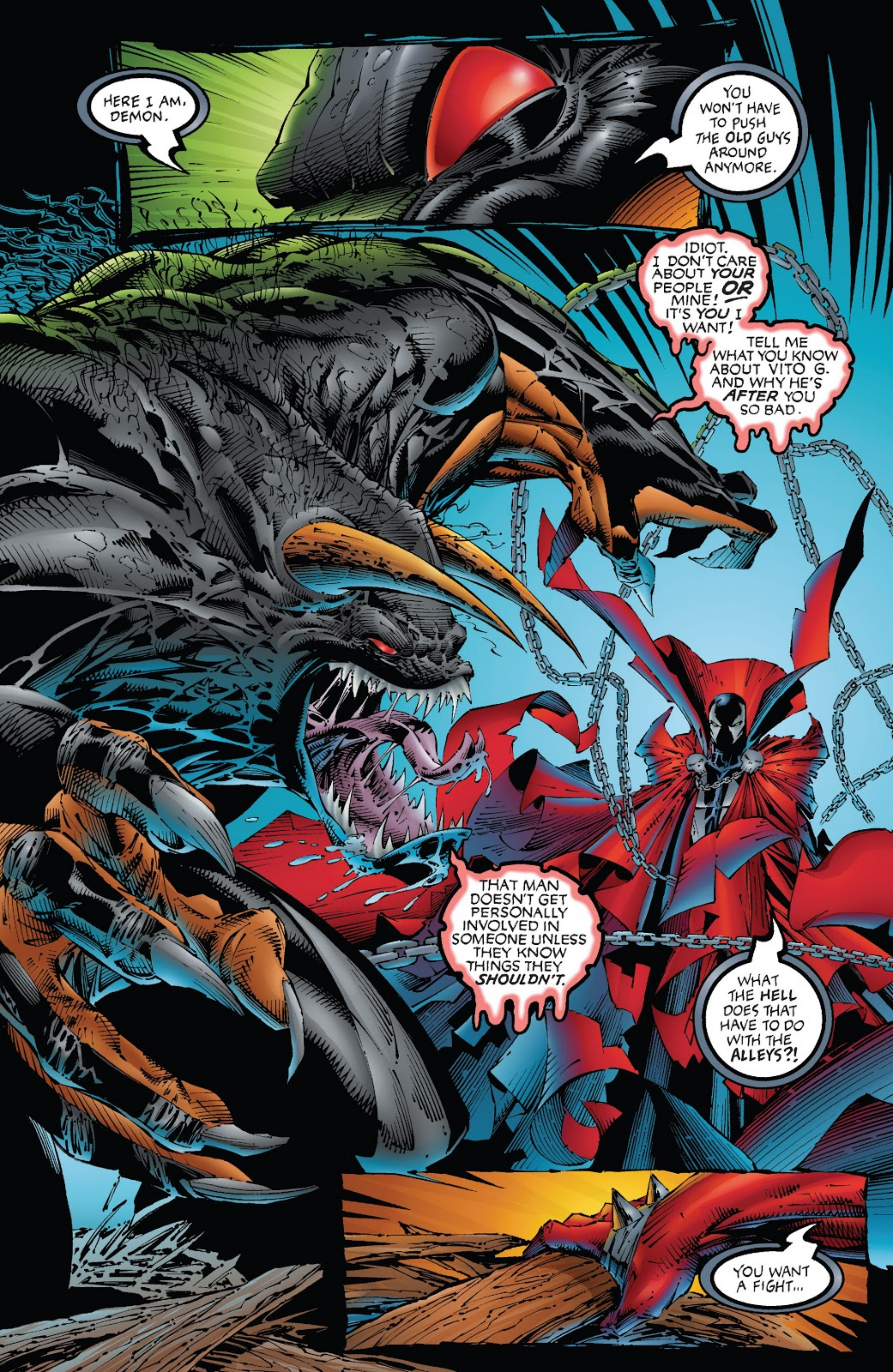
unh?



PLY-
WOOD
?!

KRUNGH

SHOW YOUR-
SELF...
COWARD!



HERE I AM,
DEMON.

YOU
WON'T HAVE
TO PUSH
THE OLD GUYS
AROUND
ANYMORE.

IDIOT.
I DON'T CARE
ABOUT *YOUR*
PEOPLE *OR*
MINE! —
IT'S YOU I
WANT!

TELL ME
WHAT YOU KNOW
ABOUT VITO G.
AND WHY HE'S
AFTER YOU
SO BAD.

THAT MAN
DOESN'T GET
PERSONALLY
INVOLVED IN
SOMEONE UNLESS
THEY KNOW
THINGS THEY
SHOULDN'T.

WHAT
THE HELL
DOES THAT
HAVE TO DO
WITH THE
ALLEYS?!

YOU WANT
A FIGHT...

The comic page is divided into three panels. The top panel shows Spawn, a blue-skinned demon with a red cape and horns, holding a wooden staff. He is looking down at a small, purple, skull-like creature. The Beast, a large, black, dragon-like creature with red eyes and sharp teeth, is on the left. The background is a desert with red mountains and a blue sky. The middle panel is split into two parts. The left part shows a close-up of the Beast's head, which is surrounded by thick, blue chains. The right part shows the Beast's head again, but now it is being crushed by the chains. The bottom panel shows Spawn in a dynamic pose, wearing his black and white military-style uniform with a red cape. He is surrounded by the same thick blue chains. The Beast is in the bottom left corner, looking up at Spawn. The background is a bright yellow-orange desert floor with red mountains in the distance.

SNAAT!

...THEN
FIGHT!

JUST
LEAVE
MY PEOPLE
ALONE!

GKUKK

PROTECTING
THEIR MASTER,
CHAINS SNAP
AND ENSNARE
THE BEAST.

NOW SPAWN
USES HIS
MILITARY SKILLS
TO GAIN
ADVANTAGE.

THERE SHOULD
BE NO NEED TO
DEplete HIS
POWERS.



DO YOU
HEAR
ME?

STAY
AWAY.



NEXT
TIME, YOUR
HEAD COMES
WITH
ME.



HOW
DARE
YOU?!

SPAWN
ASSUMED
THE BEAST
WOULDN'T
BACK DOWN.



HE'D PLANTED HIMSELF
IN FRONT OF A WEAKENED
PART OF THE FLOORING,
CONCEALING THE CRACKS
WITH HIS CAPE.

A DEFT MOVE,
AND THE
CREATURE IS
SWALLOWED BY
THE COLLAPSING
PLANKS.



THE SCENE GOES QUIET BUT FOR SCURRYING RATS AND THE FLAPPING OF CRIMSON CLOTH. IT SEEMS THIS DISPUTE HAS BEEN SETTLED.



NO!

SHASH



A BIO-MECHANICAL APPENDAGE, EXTENDED TWO-FOLD, RETRACTS IN A BLINK.

KLA-K!

YOU LISTEN GOOD! I'M GOING TO NAIL THAT PIG VITO-- AND YOU'RE GOING TO **HELP!**



?

IS THAT WHAT THIS IS ABOUT-- SOME PERSONAL VENDETTA?

I DON'T CARE! YOU WANT GRAVANO, FINE.

BUT WHAT'S WITH THIS TURF WAR CRAP?



A
DIVERSION.

"IT WASN'T LONG AGO THAT VITO FORCED ME TO BE HIS GUINEA PIG. HE WANTED THE PERFECT HITMAN.

"I WAS STUPID ENOUGH TO BE EMPLOYED BY HIM AT THE TIME.

"THREATS TO MY FAMILY WERE NOT MADE CASUALLY.

"TO PROTECT THEM, I AGREED TO THEIR HIGH-TECH *BUTCHERY*. THEY WANTED TO FUSE FLESH AND *METAL*.

"BUT SOMEONE SCREWED UP.

"THE COMBINATION OF CHEMICALS, MICROSURGERY, WHO KNOWS *WHAT* SORT OF RADIATION AND ANTI-REJECTION DRUGS *TRANSFORMED* ME.

VITO AND HIS CARTEL ARE *INTRIGUED* BY YOU, SPAWN. THAT KIND OF INTEREST CAN GET YOU *KILLED*.

YOU CALLED ME A DEMON. I COULD ONLY *WISH*.

"A FEW DAYS LATER I ESCAPED MY IMPRISONMENT."

I CAN UNDERSTAND WHY...



NO.
YOU
CAN'T.

HE **KILLED** THEM.
SLAUGHTERED MY
WHOLE **FAMILY**.

IT'S SOMETHING
HE'S QUITE
FAMILIAR WITH.

I CAN
HELP YOU.
JUST GIVE
ME AN
HOUR.

JUST TO
PROTECT
HIS ASS.

WHY
SHOULD
I?

OUR CLOAKED HERO
HEARS THE REST OF
THE GRISLY DETAILS.

PAIN AND
ANGUISH.

"BECAUSE,
LIKE ME,
YOU DON'T
HAVE A
CHOICE."



SHORTLY...

I
BELIEVE
YOU'LL
FIND THIS
USEFUL.

Uk?
HOW'D
YOU SNEAK UP
WITHOUT MAKING
A SOUND?

A large comic book panel showing Spawn, a character with a black and white mask and a red cape, holding a large, spiked, red and silver gauntlet. He is standing in a city of rubble. In the background, a large, dark, winged figure is visible. A speech bubble from Vito is at the top left.

IT DOESN'T
MATTER.

BUT THIS
MIGHT.

IT CONTAINS
EVERYTHING I
HAVE ON VITO. I
HAVEN'T READ IT ALL
BUT THERE'S
PLENTY IN HERE
TO BUST HIS
BALLS.

WHERE'D
IT COME
FROM?

HIS
ACCOUNTANT.*
VITO HAD HIM
ELIMINATED. YOU'D
BE DOING BOTH OF
US A FAVOR IF
YOU SWATTED
HIM HARD.

THANKS,
SPAWN. I'LL
GIVE YOU A
LOWDOWN WHEN
I'M *THROUGH*
WITH HIM.

I'LL BE
AROUND.

SPAWN
PAUSES
TO THINK.

FOR ALL HIS POWER,
THIS CREATURE SEEMED
AS TORTURED AS SPAWN
HIMSELF... AND SEEMS AS
WILLING TO GO TO ANY
LENGTHS TO ACHIEVE
HIS GOALS.

IS THIS CRAZED
BEING FRIEND
OR FOE... OR
SOMETHING
IN BETWEEN...?

THE END.





®

SPAWN

®

image

26
DEC

DIGITAL
EDITION



McFARLANE
94

OLIFF

EVIL.

IT'S NOT A GOAL
THAT PEOPLE
CONSCIOUSLY SET
FOR THEMSELVES,
YET MILLIONS...
BILLIONS... HAVE
BEEN EMBRACED
BY ITS SEDUCTIVE
COILS.

IT CAN HIDE BEHIND
A VARIETY OF GUISES:

POWER.
DESIRE.
COMPETITION.
JUSTIFICATION.
SELF-INTEREST.

IF THE THOUGHT OF AN HONEST
WAGE TO COVER HONEST EXPEN-
SES SEEMS LIKE A SIGN OF
STUNTED GROWTH... IF IT
DOESN'T MATTER WHERE THE
PROFIT COMES FROM, OR WHERE
IT GOES... **WATCH OUT!**



TRADE AND BARTER
ARE REAL. CASH
CAN BE USED FOR
ANY THING OR
ACTIVITY: IT'S AN
ABSTRACT. MONEY
COMES FROM
NOWHERE
AND PROMISES
EVERYTHING

IF YOUR
MOTIVES
AREN'T
CLEAN,
MONEY
ITSELF
BECOMES
EVIL.

BUT--WHEN WE
DON'T HAVE
ENOUGH MONEY,
ENOUGH EVIL, THE
WORLD TELLS US
WE'RE LOSERS. SO,
WHAT DETERMINES
OUR PLACE IN
SOCIETY IS NOT
HOW MUCH KIND-
NESS IS IN OUR
HEARTS BUT HOW
MUCH EVIL IS IN
OUR WALLETS.

THOUGH MOST PROFESS
THEIR INNOCENCE, EACH
OF US HAS FACED IT IN
OUR LIVES... EACH OF US
HAS TOUCHED IT, HOWEVER
BRIEFLY. THE BIBLE CALLS IT
SIN, AND HAS IDENTIFIED
ITS ROOT:

THE LOVE
OF MONEY.

TYPICALLY, WE
DISTILL EFFORT
INTO VALUE IN
TWO-WEEK
BATCHES.

WE LOOK FORWARD
TO IT. WE **NEED** IT.
WE CALL IT PAYDAY.

A LACK OF
THIS EVIL
CAN COST US.
DEARLY.

WHAT?!

THEY CAN'T DO THAT,
NO WAY! YOU STOP
THEM! YOU
GET MY
LITTLE GIRL
BACK!

I'M SORRY,
MR. BARNETT,
BUT THE JUDGE'S
DECISION HAS
ALREADY BEEN
HANDLED
DOWN.

I DID EVERY-
THING I COULD.
UNFORTUNATELY,
THE LAW ALLOWS
US NO FURTHER
APPEALS.

DON'T
HAND ME THAT
BULL! YOU'RE A
LAWYER,
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO
HELP ME!

WHAT AM
I PAYING
YOU FOR?!

ACTUALLY
YOU'RE NOT,
MR. BARNETT.
I'M A PUBLIC
DEFENDER.
MY BILL
ISN'T YOUR
RESPONSI-
BILITY.

AS FOR YOUR
DAUGHTER, I KNOW
THERE'S NOTHING I
CAN SAY THAT WILL
MAKE THIS ANY EASIER,
BUT THE JUDGE FEELS
SHE'LL BE BETTER
OFF WITH FOSTER
PARENTS AS
PROVIDERS.

I'M NOT
SAYING
IT'S FAIR...

**FAIR?
FAIR!!**

YOU
ASK **KATIE**
ABOUT FAIR!
SHE WANTS TO
STAY WITH ME.
SHE WON'T
GO!

SHE
DOESN'T HAVE
A CHOICE.
NONE OF US DO.
I'LL SEE YOU
TOMORROW
AT TEN.

CLICK!

SWEET
JESUS.

WHAT
KIND OF
COUNTRY
SENDS A
CHILD FROM
HER DAD.

NEW YORK STATE
COURTHOUSE,
STATEN ISLAND:
THE NEXT DAY.

WOULD YOU
CARE TO SAY ANYTHING
BEFORE I GIVE MY
RULING, MR. BARNETT?

PLEASE,
YOUR HONOR,
KATIE'S ALL I GOT. YOU
CAN'T TAKE HER AWAY
FROM ME. SHE'S ONLY
FOURTEEN BUT SHE
KNOWS SO MUCH,
THIS WHOLE THING
IS TEARING HER
TO PIECES.

SHE
DESERVES
BETTER
THAN ALL
THIS.

I WOULD
AGREE, MR.
BURNETT.

I HAVE
CONSIDERED
THE FACT THAT
KATE VALUES
YOU AS HER
FATHER, AND
HER STATED WISH
TO REMAIN A
PART OF YOUR
HOUSEHOLD.

THIS
DECISION
HAS BEEN ONE
OF THE TOUGHEST
OF MY CAREER.

THAT IS WHY,
AFTER A VERY LONG
AND DIFFICULT DELIBERA-
TION, I'VE DECIDED TO
REMOVE HER FROM YOUR
CARE AND PUT HER IN A
NEW SET OF CIRCUM-
STANCES. THIS, I
BELIEVE, IS FOR HER
OWN GOOD.

SINCE THE
DEATH OF YOUR
WIFE FIFTEEN MONTHS
AGO, THE STATE HAS
BEEN REVIEWING YOUR FILES.
AT THE TIME OF KATE'S
ADOPTION IN 1982, YOU
AND YOUR WIFE WERE
ABLE TO PROVIDE A
STABLE, SAFE
ENVIRONMENT.

UNFORTUNATELY,
THE UNTIMELY LOSS OF
YOUR WIFE HAS REMOVED
THE MOTHER FIGURE FROM THE
CHILD'S LIFE. ADD TO THAT YOUR
STEADY LACK OF EMPLOYMENT
FOR OVER ELEVEN MONTHS AND
YOUR CURRENT LIVING CONDI-
TIONS. I FEEL I HAVE **NO**
CHOICE BUT TO PLACE HER
WITH FOSTER PARENTS WHO
MIGHT BETTER PROVIDE
FOR HER FUTURE.

IF IN THE
COMING YEARS YOU
CAN SHOW THIS COURT
A LIVING SITUATION
CONDUSIVE TO A YOUNG
TEENAGER'S NEEDS,
AN AUXILIARY APPEAL
MAY BE FILED.

DO YOU
UNDERSTAND?

HE UNDERSTANDS, ALL RIGHT. TWELVE YEARS OF LOVE,
CARING AND TENDERNESS MEAN **NOTHING** IF YOU CAN'T
AFFORD TO PAY FOR A
COLLEGE EDUCATION.

FRED BARNETT DOESN'T HAVE
ENOUGH MONEY. ENOUGH EVIL.

THE DANCING FLAMES IN HELL'S EIGHTH LEVEL ARE LACED WITH THE SCENT OF BILE AND OTHER ORGANIC MATTER. OVERSEEING THE UNIMAGINABLE AREA, ITS SELF-IMPOSED RULER DOMINATES ALL. HE IS THE **MALEBOLGIA**, A DEVIL, ONE OF MANY WHO OCCUPY THE MYRIAD LAYERS WHICH COMPRISE THIS PLACE.

HIS ULTIMATE GOAL: THE BUILDING OF ARMIES, CONSISTING OF LOST SOULS FROM THE VARIOUS DIMENSIONS. THEY WILL EVENTUALLY CARRY HIS STANDARD AGAINST HEAVEN, AT **ARMAGEDDON**.

AT THE FORE WILL BE HIS OFFICERS. THESE MOST EXCELLENT OF THE DAMNED, SINGLED OUT FOR THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS IN COMBAT, WILL DRILL THEIR NIGHTMARISH TACTICS INTO THE TROOPS AT THEIR DISPOSAL.

THESE ARE HIS ELITE. THESE ARE HIS **HELL-SPAWN**.

EACH HAS A SPECIFIC DESTINY TO FULFILL, THOUGH NONE REALIZED IT AT THE TIME OF THEIR "RECRUITMENT."

IT IS ONE SUCH SPAWN WHO IS NOW UNDER THE MALEBOLGIA'S WATCHFUL EYE: THE OFFICER-IN-TRAINING WHO'S NATIVE TO THE EARTH... THE ONE FORMERLY CALLED **LT. COLONEL AL SIMMONS**.

"COME, MY PETS, LET ME AMUSE YOU WITH ANOTHER TALE," HISSES THE MALEBOLGIA. HE LEANS FORWARD, CHIN RESTING COYLY ON HIS HAND. HE CONTINUES, "THOUGH THEY ALL RESIST, THE HELL-SPAWN HAVE **ALWAYS** BECOME GREAT LEADERS FOR MY ARMY... THOSE THAT SURVIVE THE TRAINING. THERE HAVE BEEN A **FEW** DISAPPOINTMENTS. IT IS THEIR INTERNAL STRUGGLES BACK ON THEIR HOME PLANETS WHICH INTRIGUE ME... THE **HUNT**, IF YOU WILL."

AS HIS CRYPTIC DISSERTATION UNFOLDS, THE INHABITANTS, BOTH RESIDENT AND DAMNED, SHIFT CLOSER. THE MALEBOLGIA LEANS BACK AND SMILES.

"LET ME UPDATE YOU ON OUR NEWEST SELECTION... OUR NEWEST **SPAWN**."

GOD.

EVERYTHING'S
SO MESSED UP.

I'M NOT
THINKING
STRAIGHT
ANYMORE.
NOT USING
MY TRAINING
LIKE I SHOULD.

THIS WHOLE THING
IS ABOUT ME
AND WANDA.

I'VE BEEN SO
DAMN DISTRACTED
BY ALL THIS
UNBELIEVABLE
CRAP!

THE MAFIA.

HITMEN.

COPS.

EVEN
THE BOYS
IN THE
ALLEYS.

BUT AT LEAST I'VE
STOPPED HIDING LIKE
SOME COWERING DOG.

NOW THEY
KNOW I EXIST...
AND WHAT I'M
CAPABLE OF.

BALL'S IN
THEIR COURT.



LET'S SEE IF THEY CAN
COME UP WITH SOME
BETTER ANSWERS ABOUT
WHAT I'VE BECOME.

ALL I KNOW IS THAT
SINCE I GOT THESE
POWERS, I'VE BECOME
SOME FRIGGIN'
MAGNET FOR EVERY-
BODY'S ANGER.

PLUS, I SEEM TO BE
USING THE CONFLICTS
AS A WAY OF AVOIDING
HAVING TO FACE
WANDA AGAIN.*

LIKE I'M
STALLING.



YOU'RE NOT.
YOU'RE
ACQUIRING
KNOWLEDGE--
THOUGH YOU
AREN'T AWARE
OF THAT.

WHO--?!

* NOT SINCE
ISSUE THREE
-- TOM.



SURELY, IT HASN'T BEEN SO LONG THAT YOU'VE FORGOTTEN YOUR FRIEND THE *COUNT*?* YOUR LIFE *HAS* BECOME SOMEWHAT COMPLICATED.

WOULDN'T YOU AGREE?

HOW DO YOU KNOW SO MUCH ABOUT ME? WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU ANYWAY?

I'M NOT YOUR CONCERN. YOU TORTURE YOURSELF FOR ANSWERS THAT, MOSTLY, YOU'VE BEEN GIVEN.

*SEE ISSUE 9
-- Tom.



YOU'RE JUST NOT TRYING HARD ENOUGH.

MUCH AS I'M TEMPTED TO WRITE YOU OFF, YOU *DO* SHOW SOME SPARK.

SO, LET'S GO OVER WHAT YOU *DO* KNOW-- AND STOP ME IF ANY OF THIS IS NEW TO YOU.

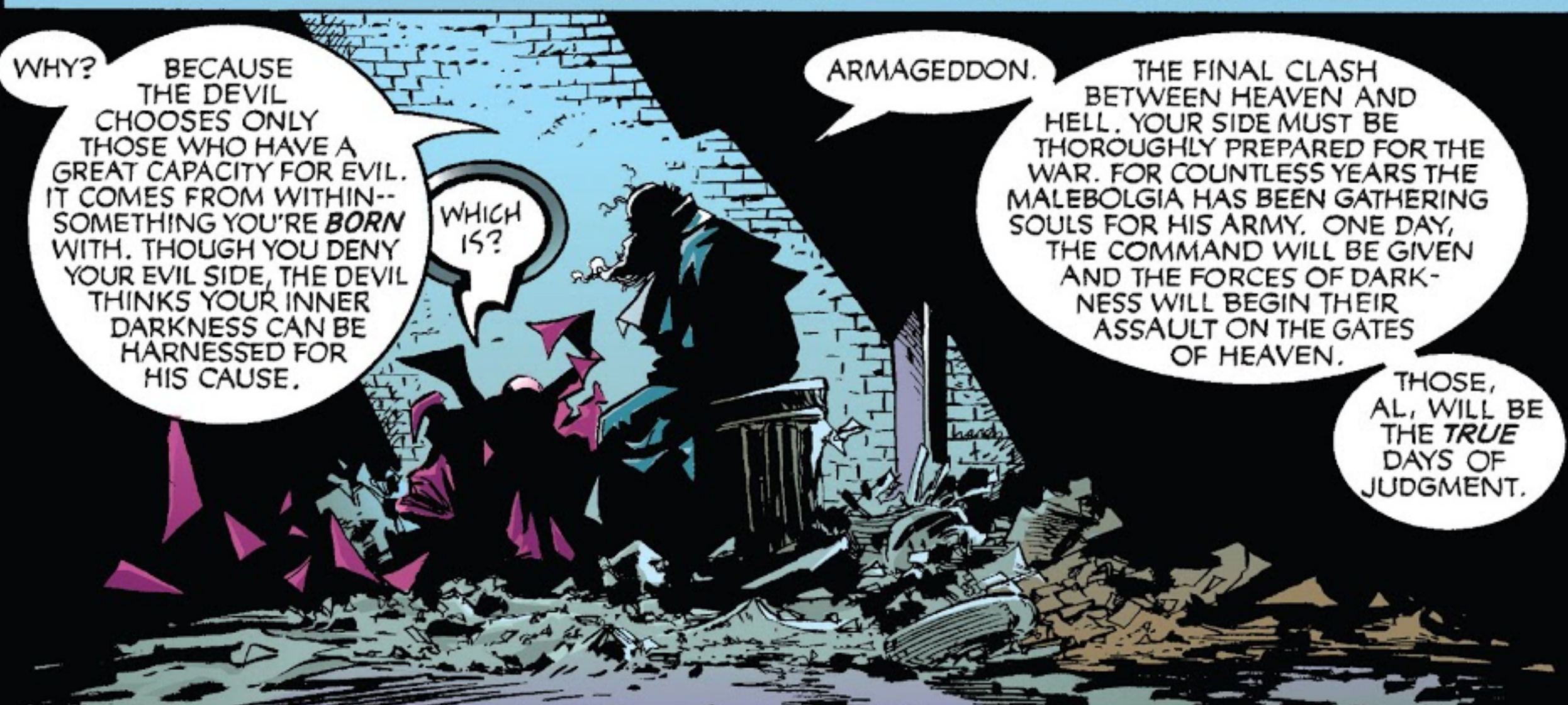
YOU'RE AL SIMMONS. YOU DIED, MADE A PACT WITH A DEVIL, NOT *THE* DEVIL, AND RETURNED TO EARTH. YOU HAVE POWER BEYOND BELIEF, A COSTUME MELDED WITH YOUR SKIN... AND A BODY MADE OF 400 POUNDS OF NECROPLASM.



YOU'VE FOUGHT DEMONS, DEVILS, ANGELS, CYBORGS-- THE PROVERBIAL NINE YARDS. BUT NONE OF THAT BOTHERS YOU BECAUSE YOU JUST WANT YOUR *NORMAL* LIFE BACK.

WOULDN'T WE ALL.

BUT WHY ME?



WHY?

BECAUSE THE DEVIL CHOOSES ONLY THOSE WHO HAVE A GREAT CAPACITY FOR EVIL. IT COMES FROM WITHIN-- SOMETHING YOU'RE *BORN* WITH. THOUGH YOU DENY YOUR EVIL SIDE, THE DEVIL THINKS YOUR INNER DARKNESS CAN BE HARNESSSED FOR HIS CAUSE.

WHICH IS?

ARMAGEDDON.

THE FINAL CLASH BETWEEN HEAVEN AND HELL. YOUR SIDE MUST BE THOROUGHLY PREPARED FOR THE WAR. FOR COUNTLESS YEARS THE MALEBOLGIA HAS BEEN GATHERING SOULS FOR HIS ARMY. ONE DAY, THE COMMAND WILL BE GIVEN AND THE FORCES OF DARKNESS WILL BEGIN THEIR ASSAULT ON THE GATES OF HEAVEN.

THOSE, AL, WILL BE THE *TRUE* DAYS OF JUDGMENT.



HE MONOLOGUE CONTINUES.

"THOUGH MY HELL-SPAWN ARE PERMANENTLY ENSNARED, THEY CONTINUE TO TEST THE BOUNDRIES OF THEIR CAGE," HISSES THE BLOATED TYRANT. "THEY WILL SCURRY AROUND, AT FIRST HOPING, *DREAMING* THAT THERE IS A WAY OUT... BUT THERE *IS* NONE. THEY HAVE *TWO CHOICES* ONLY: ACQUIRE THE TROOPS AND INSPIRE THE LOYALTY AFFORDED A FIRST-RATE OFFICER, OR *PERISH*... AND THEN ANSWER ETERNALLY FOR FRUSTRATING ME IN THE PURSUIT OF MY GOALS.

"LET'S SEE HOW OUR DEAR *AL SIMMONS* DEALS WITH HIS SITUATION."

LEANING BACKWARDS, THE MALEBOLGIA PUSHES HIS FEET FURTHER INTO THE SEARING FLAMES. NEARER CLIMB THE LESSER SPAWN, ANXIOUS TO LEARN WHY IT WAS SIMMONS PICKED FROM AMONG THE MULTITUDE OF DESERVING DAMNED.

"Ah. I SEE THAT YOU TOO ARE LOOKING FOR ANSWERS," CACKLES THE MALEBOLGIA. "HOW IRONIC THAT AS SIMMONS TORTURES HIMSELF, CASTING ABOUT FOR ANSWERS, YOU, HIS FUTURE *TROOPS*, ARE CURIOUS ABOUT THOSE SAME QUESTIONS.

"WHY HIM? WHY *AL SIMMONS*?"

A SMILE CROSSES HIS CRACKED LIPS. THE STORY-TELLER RELISHES THE ADORATION OF THE RAPT, IF CAPTIVE, AUDIENCE.

"LET ME TELL YOU WHAT MAKES A *TRUE* HELL-SPAWN."



SO I'M JUST
A PUPPET. THAT'S
ENCOURAGING.

THINGS WERE
SO SIMPLE WHEN I
WAS ALIVE. I FOLLOWED
ORDERS. KILLED WHO
THE GOVERNMENT TOLD
ME, AND COLLECTED A
STEADY PAYCHECK.

BUT NOW
THIS!

I DON'T HAVE A
HOME OR A WIFE
TO GO BACK TO, AND
ALL I SEEM TO DO
IS FIGHT SOMEONE
ELSE'S BATTLES.

NO ONE
SAID BEING
DEAD WAS
GOING TO
BE EASY,
AL.

AIN'T THAT
THE TRUTH. TELL
ME SOMETHING,
COUNT, WHY PUT
ME IN THE FUTURE.
FIVE YEARS. WHAT'S
THE POINT?

A
TEST.

ONE OF
MANY YOU
MUST PASS TO
FULFILL YOUR *DESTINY*.
THE DEVILS, BY NATURE,
ARE TRICKSTERS. THEY
THRIVE ON BENDING
THE RULES OF EVERY
GAME THEY PLAY.

YOU WANTED
BACK TO EARTH. HE
GAVE YOU THAT.
UNFORTUNATELY, HAVING
NEVER BEEN DEAD BEFORE,
YOU WEREN'T AWARE OF
YOUR *RIGHTS*. SINCE YOU
DIDN'T SPECIFY ANY CONDI-
TIONS WITH YOUR REQUEST,
THE MALEBOLGIA
GRANTED YOU THE
TIME TO SEE YOUR
WIFE. *THAT'S*
ALL.

HE GAVE
YOU *ONE* THING.
EVERYTHING ELSE
WAS HIS TO
DETERMINE. A PRETTY
SOUR TRADE,
I'D SAY.

BUT DON'T
FEEL BAD.
THERE'VE BEEN
PLENTY OF
OTHERS.

YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE THAT SUFFERS.

HEY AL! AL! GOT A MINUTE? I NEED YOU TO MEET A FRIEND.

I TOLD HIM YOU COULD HELP. Y'KNOW, DO SOME OF YOUR MAGIC.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

I KNOW WE'VE NEVER MET FORMALLY, BUT I LIVE AROUND HERE TOO... SEEN ALL THE CRAZY STUFF THAT'S BEEN HAPPENING. WELL ANYWAYS, THIS HERE IS *FRED BARNETT*, AN OLD PAL FROM 'WAY BACK. HE'S GOT A BIT OF A PROBLEM. DOESN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.

SO I TOLD HIM YOU COULD POSSIBLY HELP. GIVE HIM THE SCOOP, FREDDY.

'EVENING, SIR.

YESTERDAY THE COURTS TOOK MY *DAUGHTER* AWAY FROM ME. AFTER *TWELVE YEARS* THEY JUST TOOK MY BABY FROM ME. THEY SAY I'M NOT FIT TO BE A PARENT ANY LONGER.

AND IT'S ALL BECAUSE OF MONEY.

THE JUDGE SAYS I'VE GOT TO *PROVIDE* BETTER. GIVE HER MORE THINGS. THEN I CAN HAVE MY LITTLE KATIE BACK.



PLEASE, SIR. I DON'T HAVE ANYWHERE ELSE TO GO. NO ONE WANTS TO HELP. THEY SAY THEIR HANDS ARE ALL TIED.

ERIK, HERE, SAID YOU'VE BEEN HELPING FOLKS OUT SINCE YOU ARRIVED. HE SAYS YOU PROTECT THE POOR. WELL, I'M TELLING YOU I LOST MY LITTLE GIRL **BECAUSE I'M POOR.**

ARE YOU GUYS **NUTS?!**

I'M NOT SOME WALKING BANK MACHINE! IF I COULD MAKE MONEY, I SURE WOULDN'T BE LIVING IN THE ALLEYS! GRAB A CLUE, GUYS!!

I'M HERE TO STOP ANYONE FROM HASSLING THOSE ON MY TURF-- ESPECIALLY ANYONE WHO'S AFTER ME. I PROTECT THE FOLKS WITHIN MY AREA-- NOT THOSE FROM OUTSIDE.

NOW GO!

AND DON'T YOU EVER DO THIS AGAIN, ERIK.

BITE ME!!

SORRY, FRED. I THOUGHT HE WAS SOMEONE WHO **GAVE** A DAMN.

WHAT WILL I DO NOW?

YOU SHOULDN'T BE SO HARSH. THEY SEE YOU AS A SAVIOR. EVERYONE **ELSE** THINKS YOU'RE EVIL.

THEY'RE GETTING TOO **COCKY**. SOME OF THE GUYS THINK I'LL TAKE CARE OF EVERYTHING. "GOOD OL' AL-- HE'LL FIX IT!"

OBVIOUSLY, I'M GIVING THEM A FALSE SENSE OF SECURITY.

NO. YOU'VE GIVEN THEM **HOPE**. IT'S SOMETHING MOST OF THEM HAD LOST.



"POWER!" - SCREECHES THE MALEBOLGIA, "IT BOTH MOTIVATES AND ENABLES THE TRULY CHOSEN. THE SPAWN IS BEING HUNTED BY EVERY AGENCY IMAGINABLE, AND THE ONLY THING THAT CAN **SAVE** HIM IS HIS INFERNALLY-INSPIRED **POWER!**

"I TRANSFORM THE RECRUITS INTO CREATURES OF MAGIC. EVENTUALLY THEY LEARN THAT THEIR INNER POOL OF ENERGY WILL ONE DAY BE DRAINED. IT IS **THEN** THAT THE TRAINING BEGINS IN EARNEST.

"THEIR **REBIRTH** PLACES THEM AT A FOUR-WAY **CROSSROAD**.

"THEY CAN DO **NOTHING...** LOCK THEMSELVES AWAY FROM THEIR SURROUNDINGS... WHICH TURNS THEIR HEARTS COLD. IN TIME, VERY GRADUALLY, THEIR ENERGIES ARE SPENT ANYWAY.

"THEY CAN CONVINCE THEMSELVES THEY'RE **HEROIC**, WHILE UNWITTINGLY ACTING ON THE IMPULSES WHICH DAMNED THEM IN THE FIRST PLACE. THEY WILL SINGLE OUT AND PUNISH THE EVIL ONES AROUND THEM... EVIL SOULS WHICH THEN ARE **MINE**.

"THEY MAY CHOOSE THE PATH OF **DARKNESS**, AGGRESSIVELY DISPATCHING THOSE MOST VENAL AND VICIOUS, WHO'VE **EARNED** THEIR PLACE HERE.

"OR THEY MAY **DESPAIR**, AND PERISH THROUGH CARELESSNESS OR DESIGN.

"IN ANY CASE, THE SPAWN WILL RETURN TO ME, EITHER AS VALUED **OFFICERS...** OR AS A SOURCE OF **NOURISHMENT** FOR MY HUNGRY ARMIES!"

THE SUB-OVERLORD CASTS A SPASTIC ARM FORWARD. IT'S A GESTURE OF TRIUMPH.



WHAT
ARE YOU
TELLING
ME?

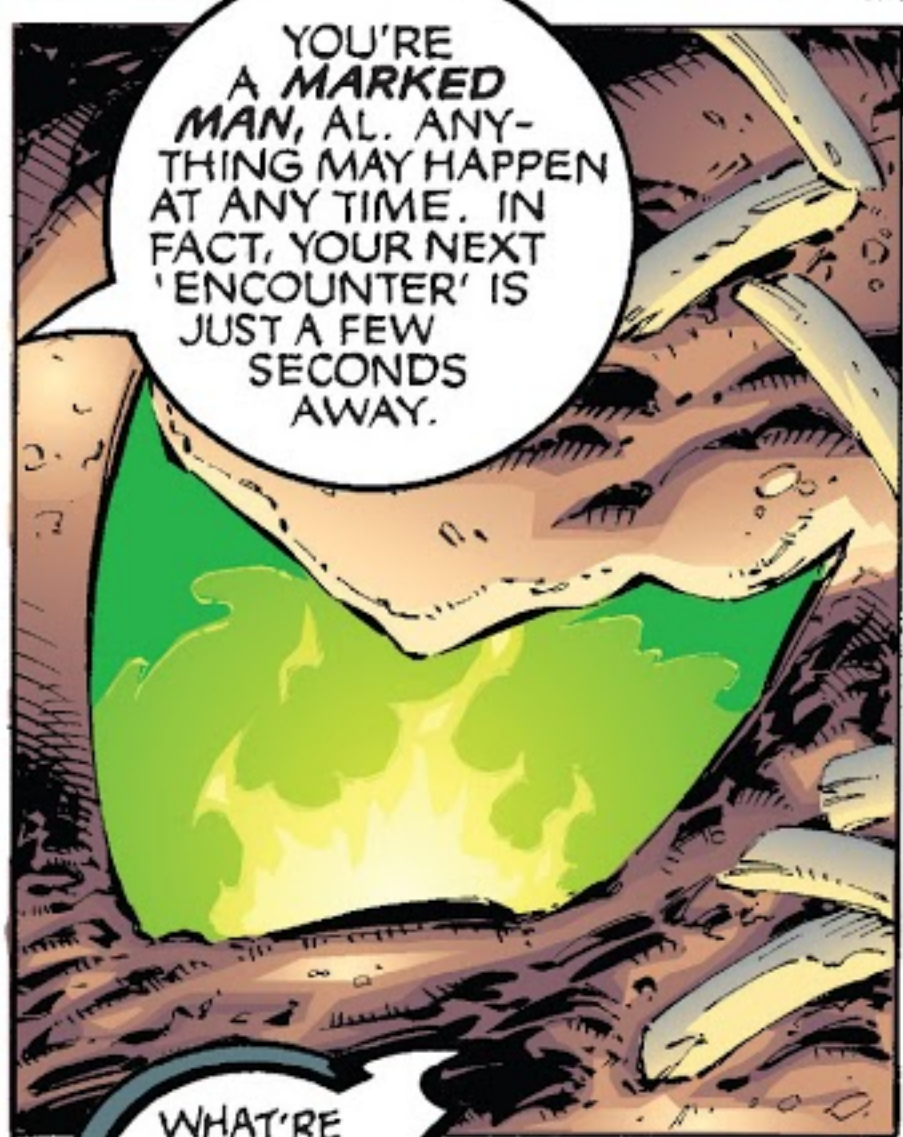
JUST
BEWARE. THERE
ARE AN INFINITE
NUMBER OF FORCES
IN OUR REALITY
AND EACH HAS AN
AGENDA IT
WISHES TO
FULFILL.

MEANING,
I'D BETTER
GET USED TO ALL
THIS CRAP 'CAUSE
IT'S HERE TO
STAY?

NOT
EXACTLY.



WATCH
VERY CARE-
FULLY. LOOK,
LISTEN AND
LEARN. THINGS
MAY NOT ALWAYS
BE AS THEY
SEEM.



WHAT'RE
YOU
JABBERING
ABOUT?

SUDDENLY HE'S
GONE, VANISHED
IN A GLOWING,
PRISMATIC PLUME.
FROM THE COLOR
OF ITS SPARKLES,
COUNT NICHOLAS
COGLIOSTRO
KNOWS IT'S BEEN
SENT FROM ABOVE.

THE LAYERS OF
HEAVEN ARE JUST
AS MULTITUDINOUS
AS THOSE OF
HELL, AFTER ALL.



LEARN,
MY
FRIEND.



MR. SIMMONS, MIGHT WE TALK?

WHA...?!
JESUS,
LADY!



CALL ME GABRIELLE, MR. SIMMONS. IF I MIGHT HAVE A MOMENT OF YOUR TIME, I REALLY WOULD LIKE TO TALK TO YOU.

I DON'T HAVE TIME TO TALK.

Oh, YES YOU DO THOUGH IT MAY NOT APPEAR THAT WAY.

Huh?

NOTHING CAN HARM US IN HERE, AND WE'RE NOW OUTSIDE OF TIME AS IT'S USUALLY PERCEIVED.

WINE? THEY HAVE A FINE CHILLED CHABLIS I CAN PERSONALLY RECOMMEND.

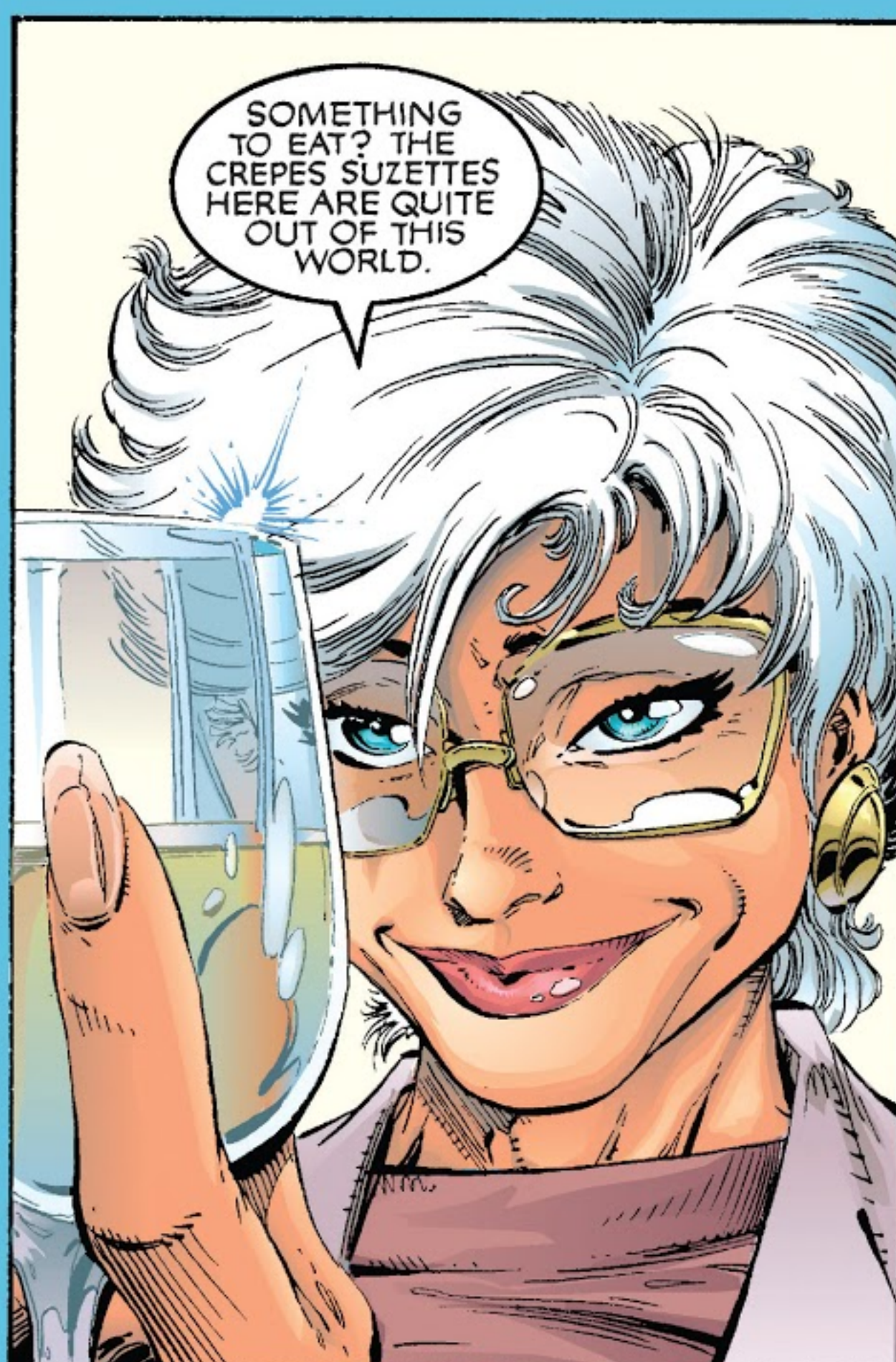
THIS. MY LIFE. EVERYTHING'S SO SCREWED UP.

NONSENSE, BUT SIT DOWN, SIT DOWN, YOU'RE MAKING ME NERVOUS.



WHAT IS THIS PLACE?

IT'S A DIMENSIONAL UMBRELLA. YOU'RE STILL IN NEW YORK, BUT WE'RE ALSO SITTING IN THE GROUNDS OF A SMALL INN IN THE LOIRE VALLEY.



SOMETHING TO EAT? THE CREPES SUZETTES HERE ARE QUITE OUT OF THIS WORLD.



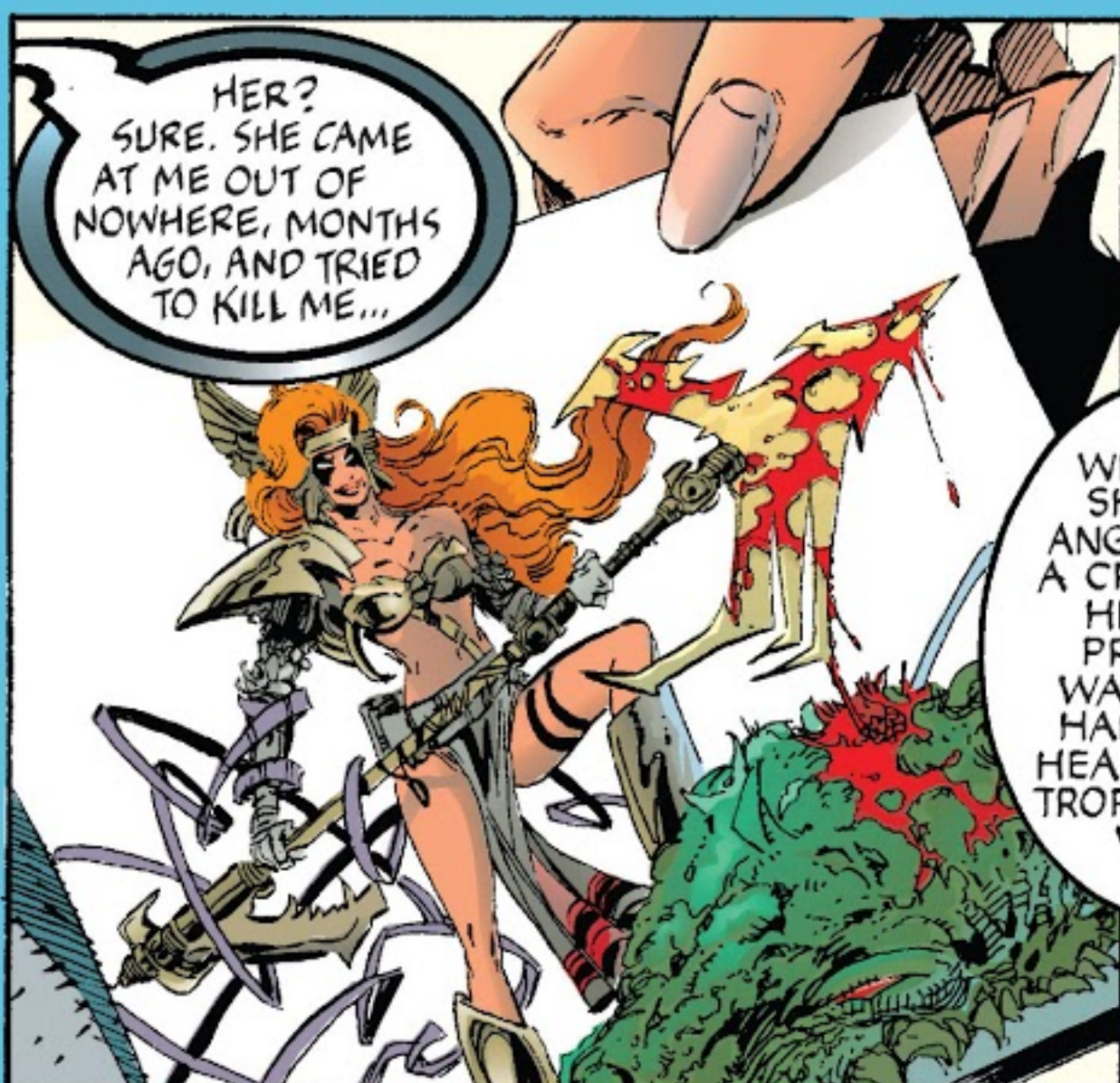
THIS IS GOOD. FIRST WINE I'VE HAD SINCE I DIED...

I'M NOT HUNGRY. WHY HAVE YOU KIDNAPPED ME?

I'VE ORDERED SOME STRAWBERRIES FOR MYSELF. EVEN ANGELS WATCH THEIR WAIST-LINES...

I WOULDN'T GO SO FAR AS TO CALL IT A KIDNAPPING, MR. SIMMONS. MORE OF AN INTERMISSION.

DO YOU REMEMBER HER?



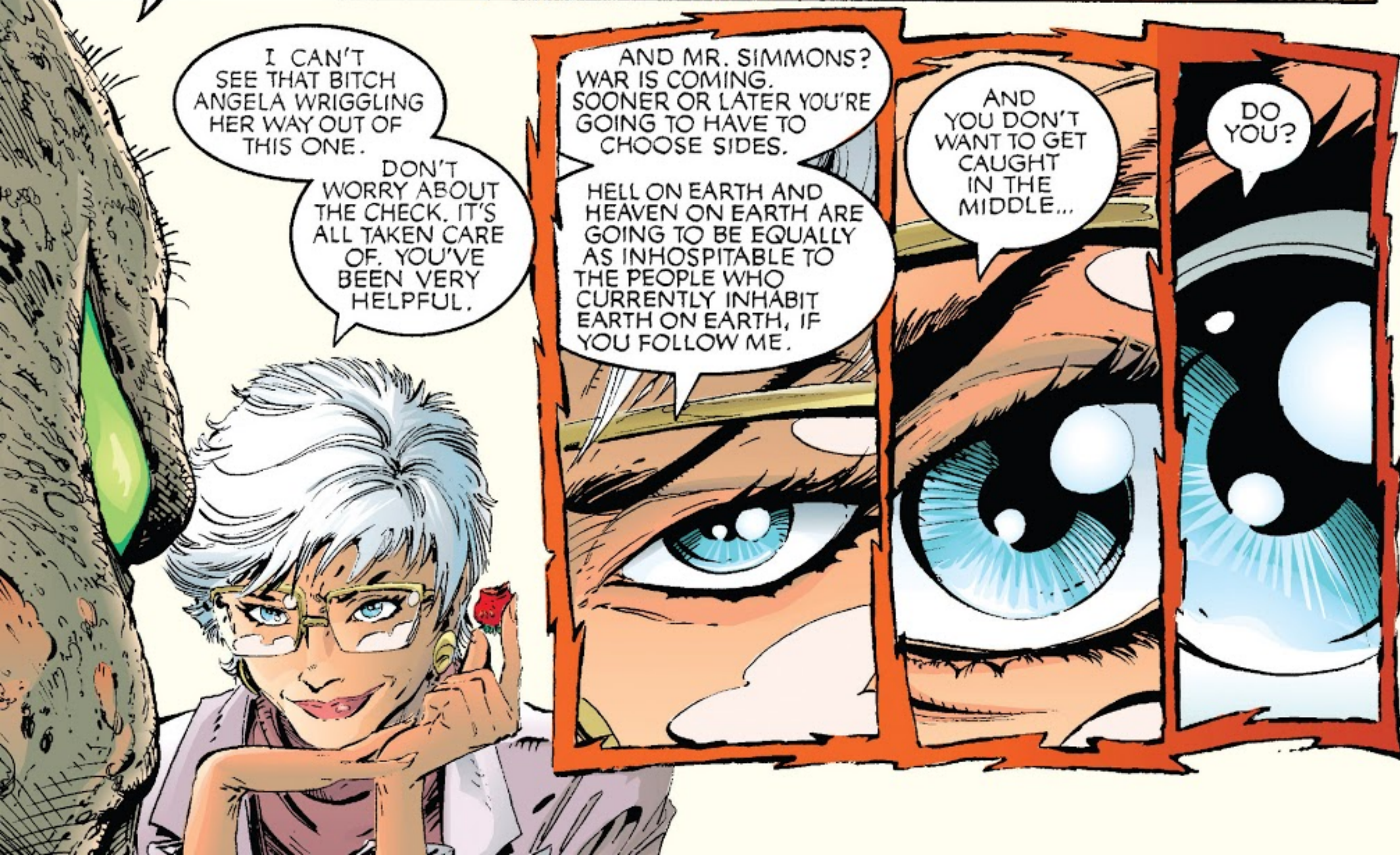
HER? SURE. SHE CAME AT ME OUT OF NOWHERE, MONTHS AGO, AND TRIED TO KILL ME...



THAT'S OUR GIRL. ALL THE SUBTLETY OF A SHERMAN TANK. HER NAME'S **ANGELA**. SHE HUNTS THINGS. PARTICULARLY THINGS LIKE YOU.

WHY?

WHY NOT? SHE'S AN ANGEL. YOU'RE A CREATURE OF HELL. SHE PROBABLY WANTED TO HANG YOUR HEAD ON HER TROPHY ROOM WALL.



JEZUS!

WHAT
THE
HELL!?

HEAVEN,
ACTUALLY.

THOUGH
NOT THE
ONE YOU
OR I WERE
TAUGHT
ABOUT.

THEY KEEP
SMALL PIECES
OF IT IN
DIFFERENT TIME
CONTINUUMS.

HOW DO
YOU KNOW
ALL THIS?!

ARE YOU
SOME KINDA
GOD?

KEE KEE.
NOT VERY
LIKELY.

BURP

I'M JUST
A MAN, MUCH
LIKE YOURSELF.
BEEN THROUGH A
FEW WARS, TOO.
THOUGHT I WAS A
BIG SHOT, COULD
BEAT ANYONE.

I WAS
WRONG.

THEY WON.
NOT COMPLETELY,
BUT ENOUGH TO
NEUTRALIZE MY
EFFORTS. NOW, I'M NOT
ALONE IN LOOKING TO
HE WHO MAY BE THE
ONE TO STAND UP TO
THESE MANY FACTIONS
AND WIN.

AND BELIEVE ME,
AL, THIS DEFINITELY IS
ABOUT WINNING.

WHAT
ABOUT THESE
ANGELS THAT
SEEM TO KEEP
POPPING
UP?*

*MORE TO COME IN THE
ANGELA MINI-SERIES --Tom.

THEY HAVE
A NEED FOR
YOU, TOO-- BUT
I CAN'T PUT MY
FINGER ON
WHAT IT MAY
BE.

WELL-- WHEN YOU DO,
CALL ME. I NEED A
BREAK FROM ALL THIS.
SEE YA AROUND.



"YES!" **YES!!**

"EVEN **HEAVEN** IS OUT TO GET OUR SIMMONS-SPAWN! NOW HE IS **COMPLETELY** DIS-ORIENTED, GROPING FOR ANSWERS. GOOD. BAD. UP. DOWN. HE DOESN'T KNOW **WHICH** WAY TO TURN! **HA HA HA!!**

LIKE A BAD COMEDIAN, THE MALEBOLGIA LAUGHS AT HIS OWN RHETORIC. TENSING UNEXPECTEDLY, HE SQUISHES THE UNLUCKY LISTENER PERCHED IN HIS CALLOUSED HAND.

"SOON, VERY SOON, HE **WILL** FIND HIS ANSWER. WHEN HE **DOES**, IT WILL **CONSUME** HIM, AS IT HAS THE OTHERS BEFORE HIM.

POWER!

"IT'S YOUR CALLING...
IT'S IN YOUR **BLOOD!**

"HOW I **DO** ENJOY
THIS GAME!"



THE GAME WILL HAVE AN END... BUT ITS LENGTH WILL
DEPEND UPON THE CREATIVITY OF ITS PLAYERS.

TWO NIGHTS LATER...



THAT
RIPPLE
A BIT
POWERFUL
FOR YOU,
AL?

AW,
TAKE
IT EASY,
COUNT!

I'M FINALLY
OUT OF MY MOOD
SWING AND NOW
YOU WANT TO
RAIN ON MY
PARADE.

FOR THE
MOMENT,
I FEEL
ALIVE! --ALMOST.

HEY FELLAS,
DID I TELL YOU
THAT YOUR GREAT AND
POWERFUL LEADER GOT
SUCKERED BY SOME FAT
LITTLE SLICE-AND-DICE
CLOWN, A FEW
WEEKS BACK?

YEP! I GAVE THE
RUNT A PORTION
OF MY ENERGY SO'S HE
COULD ~~SHIT~~ RIP HIS
BROTHERS APART. UN-
FORTUNATELY, IT LEFT
ME EATING DUST
FOR A DAY. *

THEN, THE
LITTLE GUY CAME
BACK TO GIVE ME
WHAT HE'D TAKEN!
CAN YOU IMAGINE...

BURP! 'SCUSE ME...
...A DEMON
KEEPING HIS WORD
BY RETURNING?

HA
HA
HA

...BUT NOT BEFORE
HE LAID A GOOD
SHELLACKING TO MY
HEAD... ~~SHIT~~ HA HAMEE
AM I AWESOME,
OR WHAT?!



HEY,
C'MON GUYS.
NO ONE'S
LAUGHING.
WHAT'S THE
PROBLEM?

YOU COULD'VE
HELPED HIM. DONE
SOMETHING.

I'M NOT
GOING TO
HELP NO
BLUE-FACED
PIECE OF...

NOT
HIM!

I'M
TALKING
ABOUT MY
FRIEND
FRED.



WHO
THE
HELL IS
FRED?

YOU DON'T
REMEMBER?

HERE!
MAYBE
THIS'LL
REFRESH YOUR
MEMORY!

THWAP



MAN COMMITS SUICIDE OVER CUSTODY RUL

SUICIDE NOTE RECOVERED
New York - Police have
identified the body of
Fred Barnett, 51,
daughter has
custody



MY
GOD.

HOW
D'YOU FEEL
NOW...
HERO.

FORGET IT.
NEVER MIND.
HE WAS FROM
THE OUTSIDE.
HE DIDN'T
COUNT.



STUNNED BY THE NEWS,
SPAWN SHRINKS AWAY
FROM THE GLARE OF
ACCUSING EYES...

THAT'S
IT. RUN
AWAY, YOU
LOSER.



HA HA HA HA

WEE WEE HO HO HAA

SOMEWHERE IN TIME.

HA HA HA HA

WEE WEE WEE

TENS OF MILLIONS OF
TWISTED SOULS HOWL
WITH LAUGHTER.

HA HA HA

HAW HEH HEH

HAW HAW HO HO WEE WEE

LOUDEST AMONG THEM IS
THEIR STORYTELLER. IT
WILL BE SOME CONSIDER-
ABLE TIME BEFORE THE
MANIACAL SOUNDS DIE
DOWN.



A full-page comic book illustration. In the center, a figure stands amidst a scene of urban devastation. The figure is mostly black, with a large, flowing red cape that billows out in all directions. Their eyes are a bright, glowing green. The background shows a city skyline with several tall buildings, some of which are partially obscured by the cape. The ground is covered in rubble, debris, and twisted metal. In the upper left, there are several glowing orange spheres, possibly streetlights or floating objects. The overall color palette is dominated by the red of the cape, the black of the figure, and the muted colors of the ruined city.

LOST IN THE MOST
OBSCURE SHADOWS
OF A DECAYING CITY
WALKS A DEAD MAN.

TONIGHT, FOR THE
FIRST TIME SINCE HIS
RETURN, HE FEELS
DEAD.

NEXT ISSUE:
THE CURSE

